A

CONCISE

HISTORY

OF THE

COUNTY AND CITY

OF

CHESTER,

FROM THE

MOST AUTHENTIC AND RESPECTABLE AUTHORS;

WITH

DESCRIPTIVE AND LIVELY OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

MANNERS, CUSTOMS, &c. OF THE INHABITANTS;

ALSO THE

LIFE OF ST. WERBURGH,

THE MEMORABLE FOUNDER OF THE CATHEDRAL OF CHESTER,

CONTAINING SEVERAL HISTORICAL FACTS, WORTHY THE NOTICE OF THE TRAVELLER AND THE MAN OF LETTERS.

EMBELLISHED WITH AN

ELEGANT GROUND PLAN

OF THE

CITY AND SUBURBS OF CHESTER,

TAKEN FROM A RECENT SURVEY.

Chester,

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PREFACE.

THE diſtinguiſhed weight and importance which the city and county of Cheſter have for centuries preſerved, in the ſcale of the kingdom, is a circumſtance in itſelf ſufficient to recommend a work of this nature to general notice and attention. No apology can therefore be neceſſary, on the part of the editor of this compilation, for his attempt to gratify the wiſhes both of the traveller and the reſident, in offering them this ſhort, but, he truſts, comprehenſive Hiſtory; in the execution of which he has had recourſe to the moſt authentic and reſpectable authors, on the ſubject; nor has he been, he flatters himſelf, altogether unmindful of the amuſe-

ment

ment as well as the information of the reader---by blending a proportionate modicum of livelineſs with the dryneſs of deſcription---and by rendering this little work no contemptible ſubſtitute for publications, on a ſimilar ſubject, far more voluminous in ſize, and thrice the charge of this he has now the honour to preſent to the eye of an indulgent and generous public.

A ſlight inſpection of the Ground-Plan, (in itſelf worth the price of the book) will convince the purchaſer, that ſome portion of expence, as well as labour, has not been wanting to make this little work as generally uſeful and intereſting as its nature will poſſibly admit of.

Cheſter, Oct. 10, 1791.

I. I. B. 1797.

A

SHORT ACCOUNT

OF

CHESHIRE, &c.

CHESHIRE, to its *proper hiſtorian*, I will be bold to ſay, is the firſt and moſt important county in the whole kingdom of Great-Britain. Its original and peculiar privilege of having been for many centuries a monarchy of itſelf—a complete *imperium in imperio (a)*—has preſerved in the public repoſitory of its caſtle more traces and memorials of its ancient records, than any other provincial diſtrict can boaſt of. Add to this, the hiſtory of her *Barons bold*—

The mightieſt men of bone, in her full boſom bred,

—as Drayton ſo poetically calls them; and in whoſe boſom they have flouriſhed from father to ſon *(b)* for ſuch a length of ages; and you will eaſily conceive the almoſt immenſity of matter that offers itſelf to a Cheſhire hiſtorian.

(a) I have given you Hugh Lupus's *Charter* under the collections of Henry Bradſhaw.

(b) Camden ſays, that Cheſhire always produced more gentry than any other county in the kingdom. For there was no part of England that formerly ſupplied the king's army with more nobility; or that could number more knights' families. And old *Speed* calls it the Seed-plot of gentility.

But if glory and honour ſtill bear their full proportion to every noble and every arduous taſk; here is certainly ſufficient *Palm* to excite the honeſt labours, if not to raiſe the enthuſiaſm, of any future hiſtorian of this diſtinguiſhed county.

That there is no county in England more famous for a *long ſucceſſion of ancient gentry*, than this of Cheſter, will not be denied; nor for ſetting forth their deſcents, and memorable employments; inaſmuch as the ſubſtance of all public records for almoſt four hundred years are carefully *preſerved in the caſtle of Cheſter*; and that the *private evidences concerning the particular families* of that county, are, by reaſon of their *long duration*, (c) *leſs diſpers'd* than thoſe of many others, through the great and frequent changes that have befallen them in moſt places.—It is therefore to be hoped, that the *worthineſs* of the *ſubject* will ſtir up ſuch, whoſe greater abilities may, by a more exact ſurvey and ſearch into the antiquities of this ſhire, contribute farther to its honour, by reſtoring to light its ancient glory, for the more ample content of all *perſons concerned* therein, and their own laſting memory.

The *native generoſity*, and *martial proweſs*, of the gentlemen of Cheſhire, have, for time immemorial, been proverbial. But this generous turn of ſentiment has always been rendered more eminently conſpicuous, by having been particularly directed to that point of conduct, which ſeemed moſt likely to

(c) The great Selden, in his notes upon Drayton's Poly-Olbion, has this remark—" Generally in theſe northern parts of " England, the gentry is from ancient time left preſerved in " continuance of *name*, *blood*, and *place*; and moſt particularly " ſo in Cheſhire, &c."

to promote the *peculiar honour*, and the *diſtinguiſhed character*, of this county. Of this nature, certainly, was their celebrated hoſpitality of yore: Which was really ſo diffuſively extenſive, as not only ſtill to live in poetic ſong, but in the relations of graver writers. I ſhall preſently give inſtances from both. But I muſt obſerve, that the modern ſons of Cheſhire are not any ways degenerated from the ſpirit of their fore-fathers, in the *provincial* character of *generoſity*.—If the Engliſh *roaſt beef*, and the *beverage* of our anceſtors, retain at this day any part of their former diſtinction, except in rhime and metre, it is undoubtedly upon what old Drayton calls—"The *Ceſtrian Shore*." And the Peers themſelves, thoſe national inheritors of honour, have not ſhewn more attention to the methodiſing, and illuſtrating of their Journals, *(d)* than the preſent gentlemen of Cheſhire have exerted in the preſervation of their county records. With this noble view, they have fitted up a ſuite of rooms in the caſtle of Cheſter, I wont barely ſay with every degree of convenience, but with every degree of elegance.

Both poetic and proſaic ſtory, celebrate the ancient hoſpitality of Cheſhire.—The muſe, in Drayton's Poly-Olbion, ſpeaking of our wars in France, thus records the proweſs of *the men of Cheſhire*, by ſaying that they had

——"Livelihood of their own, their ages to ſuſtain;
"Nor did the tenants pay the landlord's charge maintain;
"But

(d) The houſe of Peers is at preſent ſo attentive to this important ſubject, as to have appropriated a particular fund for the noble purpoſes of arranging their records. And out of this fund, the late Mr. Morant, of Colcheſter, in Eſſex, a Jerſey man, had a munificent ſalary for explaining thoſe Journals which were written in old French.

" But as abroad in war, he ſpent of his eſtate;
" Returning to his home, his hoſpitable gate,
" The richer and the poor ſtood open to receive—
" They, of all England moſt, to antient cuſtoms cleave."

And Fuller, in his *Engliſh Worthies*, *(e)* confirms this pleaſing account of the *hoſpitable gate*, in telling us—" That the Cheſhire gentry are remarkable for four things; their *numbers*, not to be paralleled in England in the like extent of ground; their *antiquity*, their *loyalty*, and their *hoſpitality*; no county keeping better houſes, which, becauſe all grows on their own, may be the better afforded. —This truth has given riſe to a pleaſant obſervation; that it appeared to all people that the *Cheſhire gentry* were good houſe-keepers, becauſe they gave ſo many *wheat-ſheaves* in their *coats* of *arms*; *bread* being the *ſtaff* of *hoſpitality*, and *wheaten* the *beſt* of all *bread*. Indeed, upwards of forty *(f)* *wheat-ſheaves*, called *Garbs* in heraldry, may be reckoned, which are borne in the ſeveral *coat-armours* of the *gentry* of this county"—And he takes his farewel of Cheſhire, by earneſtly wiſhing—" That ſome of their *hoſpitality* were planted in the *South*, that it might bring forth fruit therein."

Now, whether the *pleaſant reaſon* of this *bearing* in their arms, mentioned by Fuller, may be the true one, or the reverſe; *(g)* it certainly ſtrikes us with

(e) Pages 171, 187.

(f) Birkenhead, Brerewood, Cholmondeley, Colwich, Cowper, Cradock, Darby, Dedwood, Dodd, Doleman, Eden, Fitton, Groſvenor, Hatton, Boldeſheaſe, Kemp, King, Langton, Leftwich, Maſterſon, Maxfield, Merebury, Mylneton, Oldfield, Preſton, Raincourt, Read, Rutter, Sandbach, Skellerne, Styche, Tilſton, Vernon, Weever, Weaver, Wheat, Whitley, Wickſted, Wirrall.

(g) *Kent's Grammar of Heraldry* has this obſervation under the

with the agreeable appearance of an ingenious probability. And as the higheſt inſtance of *Cheſhire hoſpitality*, he might have carried on the alluſion, by telling us, that theſe garbs, or *wheat-ſheaves*, are borne by the city of Cheſter, as well as by the county palatine itſelf.

But as *local* cuſtoms, of long ſtanding, give us the cleareſt inſight into the manners and the genius of a people, I cannot avoid obſerving, that *frumenty (b)* makes a principal entertainment at all our *country wakes*, and that no *feſtal anniverſary* can poſſibly be celebrated amongſt the inhabitants of Cheſhire, unleſs the *ſtaff* of *hoſpitality*, as Fuller calls it, crowns the ſocial and the *feſtal board*.

The above paſſage from Fuller puts me in mind of a ſimilar remark of the ſenſible Verſtegan, in his "*Reſtitution of decayed Intelligence in Antiquities.*" The modern names of *lord* and *lady*, he ſays, are only poliſhed contractions from the Saxon titles of *Hlaford* and *Hleafdien*. And he is certainly ſo far right, that whatever words are at this time ſtrictly and purely *Engliſh*, are undoubtedly nothing more than the *old Saxon* ones modernized, by ſmoothing away and poliſhing the roughneſs. For *hlaf* means *bread*, and *dien* means to *ſerve* or *diſtribute* it. The ſenſe of *hlaf* we ſtill partly retain in the word *loaf*; of which the Saxon term was moſt certainly the parent.—A *hlaf-ford*, therefore, or a *lord*, amongſt our anceſtors, was one who was the proveditor of Ceres, or the *afforder* of

the family name of Raincourt—"The bearing of garbs, denotes a perſon given to *hoſpitality*, and charitable to the poor."

(b) Our common people call it firmitry—it is an agreeable compoſition of boiled *wheat*, milk, ſpice, and ſugar.

of the ſtaff of life. And the amiable title of *hleaf-dien* was applied to the partner of his joys and cares, as being the diſtributor of her huſband's bounty. Whether the preſent refinements of life permit any part of the character of the Saxon *hlaf-ford* to exiſt in the modern *lord*, *(i)*—" out of " the bounds of Wirrall, and of Delamere"—muſt be left to the readers to determine. But the the antient *hleaf-dien* ſo far exiſts in the modern *lady*, that by ſtill preſiding at her huſband's table, ſhe diſtributes his bounty to the ſurrounding gueſts.

Thoſe, who affectedly ape the ſuppoſed *refined* manners of a rival nation, want to laugh this cuſtom out of countenance. But I own I always glow with an honeſt indignation, whenever I ſee the *ſubſtantial manners* and the *ſenſible cuſtoms* of our anceſtors, ſo miſerably fricaſſied away as they are, by profeſſedly mimicking the genius of a people ſo contrary to our own.

I ſhall now leave this ſcene of Cheſhire hoſpitality, where the *hlaford* and the *hleafdien* flouriſh as of yore, in order to celebrate thoſe, her literary ſons, who have reflected honour upon their native ſoil, by endeavouring to preſerve any memorials of her antient glory. Amongſt theſe I ſhall not preſume to rank the collectors of her public records within the caſtle of Cheſter; becauſe whatever care

(i) " We find that our nobility, which generally do bear " the name of *lord*, have always, and as it were of a ſucceſſive " cuſtom (rightly according unto that honourable name) main- " tained and fed more people, to wit, of their ſervants, re- " tainers, dependents, tenants, and alſo the poore, than the " nobility of any country in the continent, which ſurely is a " thing very honourable and laudable, and moſt well befitting " noblemen and right noble minds."

Verſtegan, page 317.

care and pains they may have exerted, has been purely *official*. I ſhall only ſay, in general, that if thoſe public repoſitories of the *tower of London*, the *rolls chapel*, and the *office of the exchequer*, are of the leaſt conſequence to the kingdom at large, the *caſtle of Cheſter* is of the ſame and equal importance to this our county palatine. But there is one public record, formerly preſerved in this repoſitory, of much too uſeful and grand a nature to be paſſed over in ſilence; the ſurvey, which William the Conqueror ordered to be taken of all England; and which went under the name of *domeſ-day book*, becauſe it was a recorded evidence of *judgment* in all poſſible caſes of diſputed property. *Dom*, or, as we now write it, *Doom*, being the Saxon word for *judgment*. But beſides this general ſurvey, which related to all England, *(k)* and to Cheſhire in common with the other counties, there was a *domeſ-day* book peculiar only to our palatinate, and which undoubtedly took its riſe from this ſenſible inſtitution of the Norman Conqueror. Our great antiquary, Sir Peter Leyceſter, frequently mentions this *Cheſhire domeſ-day* in his hiſtory of Buclow hundred; and he not only gives

(k) Though *domeſ-day book* is generally ſuppoſed a ſurvey of all England, yet the four northern counties are not comprehended in the *original ſurvey* now remaining in the exchequer. The Saxon Chronicle however ſays, "tennuit Rex magnum Concilium, et mittebat ſervos ſuos per *totam* Angloram Terram, ſcrutari, quot *Hydarum* eſſent in ſingulis Comitatibus, quidue Rex ipſe haberet, et quantum *Cenſus* annui." Chron. Sax. p. 186.—And all the writers of that age ſpeak of this ſurvey as extending over the *whole* kingdom; though later ones imagine, that the four northern counties had ſuffered ſo much by the ravages of war, that the king's commiſſioners found it impoſſible to take any exact ſurvey of thoſe provinces.

gives us ſome extracts from its contents, but in ſeveral places he thus particularly deſcribes it:— "There was a *domeſ-day* book in our exchequer "at Cheſter formerly, wherein many deeds and "records were enrolled; but this book of record "is *now loſt*." And again—"In the roll of the "antient charters, called *domeſ-day*, antiently re- "maining among the records at Cheſter, but *now* "*loſt*, and *taken away*, it was found—Leuca quæ "fuit uxor, &c." *(l)*

But, with the leave of our great antiquary, this invaluable record, or at leaſt a record which aſcertains the lineal and uninterrupted ſucceſſion of almoſt every ſingle acre of Cheſhire property for at leaſt five hundred years, is now in my poſſeſſion. I ſhould be ſorry to ſuppoſe it the ſtolen and the precious caſket of antient charts, which Sir Peter tells us was *taken away*. But I own my heart leaps with a provincial joy, when I reflect that accident has put it in my power to oblige my countrymen with this *opus aureum*, this golden record; ſo infinitely ſuperior to any record now exiſting, either in the archives or in the annals of any other county in Great Britain. And if parliament has thought it an object worthy of national wiſdom to print the original *domeſ-day* book at the expence of the public, which relates only to one ſingle period of time, *(m)* it is ſcarcely to be imagined, that the

(l) Pages 220, lin. penult.—317, lin. 6.

(m) The wiſdom of parliament, aſſigned two thouſand pounds of the national money for the publication of *domeſ-day book*. And if this noble deſign is ſtill unexecuted, it is owing to ſome difficulties in aſcertaining the *beſt mode* of publication.

the *generous good ſenſe*, for which our county has been remarkable, would be inattentive to the public preſervation of this invaluable record; which faithfully regiſters the ſucceſſion, not only of their property, but of their progenitors for ſuch a length of centuries.

But it is not only in the ſenſible inſtitution of Domeſ-day book, that this our *inferior monarchy* of Cheſhire hath imitated the noble example of its *paramount* and *parent-empire*. For if the latter had ſtill another valuable record, from the colour of its cover, and the place of its preſervation, called the *Red Book of the Exchequer (n)* our *Empire of Cheſhire* had equally its valuable record, under the denomination of the *Red Book*. The antiquity of this original record is very great. It was once the poſſeſſion of the abbey of St. Werburgh's in Cheſter: is written upon parchment; and contains the evidences of their endowments, copies of legal proceedings out of plea rolls, their ſeveral tranſactions, and other authentic notices concerning this venerable monaſtery. It is now very carefully preſerved in the archives of the Dean and Chapter.

Partly coeval with this record, is a remarkable manuſcript, frequently quoted under the title of *Annales Ceſtrienſes*, or the *Cheſter Annals*. The author of this manuſcript is unknown. It conſiſts of

" (*n*) There is alſo in the keeping of the King's Remembrancer, an ancient miſcellany of ſeveral notable treatiſes; which volume is commonly cited and called by the name of *Liber ruber Scaccarii*, or, the *Red Book of the Exchequer*. The collector of the treatiſes in this book, is reaſonably thought by Mr. Madox, to have been *Alexander de Swereford*, Archdeacon of Shrewſbury, and an officer in the Exchequer in the latter end of the reign of Henry the Second."

Bp. Nicholſon's Hiſt. Libr. edit. 1714, p. 213.

of annals from the birth of Chriſt to the year 1255; and particularly recites many hiſtorical circumſtances relative to Cheſter, with the renowned acts of its great monarch, the famous Earl Randal.

This monarch, Randal the Third, ſurnamed *Blundeville*, *(o)* was as celebrated in his time, as any of the Seven Champions of Chriſtendom. And what is more, the famed ſtory of his atchievements, is as much founded in truth, as that of the others is in fable.—Robert Sangland or John Malverne—for the author is uncertain—gives us a *pointed* inſtance in what manner this mighty Earl was made the principal hero of the rhimes of thoſe days. He introduces an ignorant Monk attempting to chaunt Maſs, and giving this excuſe for his utter inability;

" I can not the *Pater Noſter*, as the Prieſt it ſingeth;
" But I can Rimes of Robin Hood, and *Randal of Cheſter*,
" But of *our Lord* and *our Lady* I lerne nothing at all."

Next to the *Cheſter Annals*, in point of time, is a *Hiſtory of the Earldom of Cheſter*, collected by Archbiſhop Parker, *(p)* and depoſited with his other literary treaſures in Bennet College Library. The title of it is--" de Succeſſione Comituum Ceſtriæ, a Hugone Lupo ad Johannem Scoticum." And it is ſo far faithful to its title, as to contain the hiſtory and atchievements of our ſeven *Ceſtrian Monarchs*. Of this whole number how pleaſing is it to reflect, that, agreeably to the genius and the manners of thoſe times; they were all of them patterns of military proweſs! And in reſpect of acts

(o) He was the ſixth Earl, or Monarch of Cheſter.
(p) Matthew Parker was conſecrated Archbiſhop of Canterbury, Dec. 17, 1559.

acts of real munificence, every ſingle monarch atchieved—" Imperial Works and worthy Kings." ---The great Selden quotes this manuſcript in his *Titles of Honour*, under the character of the *Old Hiſtory of the Earldom of Cheſter. (q)*

If we are obliged, however, to the venerable Abbey of St. Werburgh's for the *Red Book*; we are equally indebted to it for a learned member of that ſociety, by the name of *Henry Bradſhaw*. A ſenſe of gratitude to the charitable inſtitution that gave him bread, produced a poem in honor of the tutelary Saint, to whom his Abbey was dedicated. Webb, in King's Vale-Royal, quotes ten ſtanzas of his verſes, and calls him—" our beſt antiquary."*(q)* And Fuller, in his Worthies of England, gives us the following account of him—" *Henry Bradſhaw* was born in the city of Cheſter, " and lived therein a *Benedictine*. He was a dili- " gent hiſtorian; having written no *bad Chronicle*, " and another Book, of the *Life of St. Werburgh*. " He flouriſhed about the year 1513 *(r)*."

The Chronicle, referred to by Fuller, has this title—*De Antiquitate et Magnificentiâ Urbis Ceſtriæ*; of the antiquity and magnificence of the city of Cheſter.—But I muſt not conceal my doubts, that this *Chronicle of Bradſhaw*'s, and his *Life of St. Werburgh*, are in reality one and the ſame work. John Pits, in his account of this writer, tells us, " that he is apt to believe his " former labours were all ſwallowed up by another " work, *His Life of St. Werburgh*, which is ſtill " to

(q) Page 729.
(q) Part 2d, page 25, line 16, and pages 9, 11, 25, 31, 32.
(r) Page 290.

" to be found in ſeveral of our libraries." *(s)* And it is ſomething remarkable, that if theſe two were diſtinct works, neither Leland nor Webb ſhould quote his *Chronicle*, though ſo expreſsly to their purpoſe; whereas each of them gives us large extracts from his life of St. Werburgh. *(t)* The one of theſe writers too was the cotemporary of Bradſhaw; the other his fellow citizen, and of the ſame century. But whether theſe writings are the ſame, or diſtinct works, I cannot determine. For it is moſt certain, they are neither in the Oxford nor the London Muſeum; neither do they lie concealed in that *Mine* of learning, the Bodleian library.

The remains of Bradſhaw's religious aſylum might be reaſonably ſuppoſed to have afforded them a ſafe protection under its venerable roof; if the library of the Dean and Chapter had not been ineffectually ranſacked for this purpoſe. The ingenious author of the Britiſh Topography hath indeed told us, " That Bradſhaw's life in verſe, of the " glorious Virgin St. Werburgh was printed at " London in Quarto 1521 *(u)*." But I fear it was a life of this *glorious Virgin*, compoſed by ſome inferior author; and not the famous one in metre of her grateful votary, Henry Bradſhaw. My reaſons are—that the æra of this publication 1521, is nearly coeval with the very æra of its exiſtence. And beſides, this circumſtance is not only unknown to all our writers, but the very inquiſitive and very intelligent Biſhop Nicholſon ſpeaks of it, as

(s) Pits de Angl. Scriptor. page 690.
(t) King ut Supra.—Leland Collectan. Vol. iii. page 58.
(u) Page 119.

as *ſtill unpubliſhed*, in the improved edition of his hiſtorical library, 1714 *(v)*.

It is however certainly true, that many parts of this celebrated poem have frequently been tranſcribed by its fond admirers. And particularly I have in my poſſeſſion ſeveral of the *diſjecti membra Poetæ*. He writ in ſtanzas of ſeven verſes each; frequently adding a couplet to the ſtanza, in order to round the period, and to complete the ſenſe. As a ſample of his rhyme, accept the grand charter of William the Conqueror to his nephew Hugh Lupus; by which he inveſted him with the ſeignory and the monarchy of Cheſter, and formed the baſis of our *excluſive rights*, and conſtituted the *grand æra* of our Cheſhire Empire.

THE ROYAL CHARTER OF THE CHESHIRE EMPIRE,
IN OLD ENGLISH METRE.

" The King gave to him for his inheritance
" The county of Cheſter with its appurtenance—
" By victory to win the aforeſaid Earlidome,
" Freely to govern it as by conqueſt-right;
" Made a ſure charter to him and his ſucceſſion,
" By the ſword of dignity to hold it with might,
" And to call a parliament at his will and ſight.
" To order his ſubjects after true juſtice,
" As a perpotent Prince, and ſtatutes to deviſe.

" By virtue of *this grant*, ſays the great anti-
" quary Camden *(w)*, *Cheſhire* enjoyed all *ſovereign*
" *juriſdiction* within its own precincts. And that,
" in ſo high a degree, that the *ancient Earls* had
" *Parliaments* of their own barons *(x)* and te-
" nants;

(v) Page 11.
(w) Camden's Britannia, vol. 1. page 662.
(x) Every Baron had four Eſquires, every Eſquire had one Gentleman, and every Gentleman one Valet, for their attendants. *Erdeſwicke's Manuſcripts.*

The

" nants; and were not obliged by the *Engliſh Acts*
" *of Parliament*. Theſe high and otherwiſe un-
" accountable juriſdictions, were thought neceſſary
" upon the *marches*, and borders of the kingdom;
" as inveſting the governors of thoſe provinces
" with *dictatorial* power, and enabling them more
" effectually to ſubdue the common enemies of the
" nation." And agreeably to theſe *high powers*, when the ſtile in all legal proceedings of the courts at Weſtminſter ran, *Contra Coronam et Dignitatem Regis*; in our county palatine theſe *pleas* were conſtantly expreſſed *Contra Dignitatem Gladii Ceſtriæ*.

This famous *ſword of dignity* is ſtill remaining in the Britiſh Muſeum. It is in length about four feet; and ſo unwieldy, as to be brandiſhed with great difficulty by a very ſtrong man with both his hands. The blade is two-edged, and has this inſcription immediately beneath the hilt; Hugo Comes Ceſtriæ; the hilt itſelf is decorated with pearls.

One of his firſt Barons, in Hugh Lupus's charter, and the *lineal dignity* of another, *(y)* is ſtill preſerved

The Barons too had their *free Courts* for all pleas and ſuits, except thoſe belonging to the *dignity of the Earl's Sword*; and they had power of Life and Death. The laſt inſtance of this power was exerted in the perſon of Hugh Stringer, who was tried for murder in the Baron of Kinderton's Court, and executed 1597, the 39th of Queen Elizabeth.

(y) Ricardus de *Vernon* Baro de Shipbrok. Gilbertus Venables Baro de Kinderton. Whoſe *direct lineal* deſcendant, Peter Venables, Baron of Kinderton, died without iſſue male towards the concluſion of the laſt century. His dowager, the Baroneſs of Kinderton, ſurvived him to the year 1717; and they both lie buried in the ſame grave, in the chancel of the church of Middlewich. The preſent George Venables Vernon, Lord Vernon, Baron of Kinderton, is a lineal deſcendant by the female ſide.

ſerved in the Right Honourable George Venables Vernon, Lord Vernon, *Baron of Kinderton*. And however light our Cheſhire honors may appear at preſent, yet I am ſure that while Lord Vernon enjoys his *modern honors* in common with many of his Peers, with regard to his *ancient* barony of Kinderton, he is moſt honorably and ſingularly *peerleſs*.

This digreſſion, I am afraid, will be conſidered tedious. But I have ſo frequently hazarded the ſeemingly pompous expreſſion, of the *Monarchy* and the *Empire of Cheſhire*; that unleſs I had produced ſome authentic vouchers for the truth and propriety of this expreſſion, I might have appeared rather to have written with the bombaſt of *Bays* in the Rehearſal, than to have preſerved the grave fidelity of a relater of facts.

I ſhall now, therefore, proceed with the ſketch of the hiſtory of our important county; and ſhall endeavour to preſent you with a chronological ſeries of thoſe literary ſons of our *Mater alma Ceſtrienſis* (if you will allow me this expreſſion of filial fondneſs,) who have reflected honor upon their native ſoil, by ſtudiouſly preſerving any memorials of her ancient glory. And in the firſt place, let me here commemorate the laudable example of *William Alderſey, Mayor of Cheſter* in 1560; who, finding the liſt of his predeceſſors in that office to be moſt exceedingly defective and confuſed, ordered a *new and correct arrangement* of them to be made, with infinite pains, fidelity, and expence. We may eaſily judge how corrupt and imperfect their regiſters were before; when the name of *Alano de Whetley* never once occurred in them, though he had

had ſerved the office of Mayor at leaſt in *four* ſeveral periods of time. And indeed the very great and material difference that appears in the ſeparate *liſts of theſe Magiſtrates*, given us by Smith and Webb, our next collectors, is a plain indication of the extreme corruption that had vitiated and defaced their Journals.

Our next hiſtorical collectors, as I have juſt mentioned, were two *natives of Cheſhire*, *William Smith* and *William Webb*; who gleaned up their celebrated memorials of the antient glory of our Palatinate almoſt two hundred years ago. Though their labours have been conſecrated to poſterity hand in hand *(a)*, yet *Smith* is rather prior to *Webb* in point of time. He was a purſuivant at arms, by the ſtile and title of *Rouge Dragon*; and appears to have made his collections about the year 1590. A copy of theſe collections was entruſted to the faithful preſervation of Sir Ranulph Crew, Knt. Lord Chief Juſtice of the Court of King's Bench; and the attentive regard of Mr. Ranulph Crew, his Lordſhip's grandſon, for the honor of learning, and his native county, reſcued this copy from its not diſhonourable concealment, into that diſtinguiſhed ſtation which it has ſince enjoyed. William Smith's literary and antiquarian aſſociate, *William Webb*, had a learned education in our celebrated Univerſity of Oxford; where he took the regular degree of Maſter of Arts *(b)*. He had always

(a) Their united labours, form the bulk of King's Vale Royal, publiſhed in Folio 1656.

(b) I have very great reaſon to believe he was a member of our then newly-founded College of Brazen-Noſe. But the printed Catalogues of our Oxford Graduates, go no higher than 1659.

always a turn and paſſion for *letters*; though the Res auguſta Domi, the narrowneſs of his circumſtances, obliged him to ſubmit to the diſagreeable drudgery of being many years clerk in the Mayor's Court at Cheſter; and in the year 1615, he ſerved the office of *Under-Sheriff* to Sir Richard Lea, of Lea and Dernhale, Knt. At this time he was between fifty and ſixty years of age; and moſt probably made his collections ſomewhere about 1600. Very fortunately for the public, theſe collections, like thoſe of *Smith*'s, were reſcued from their concealment, by the favourable patronage of Sir Simon Archer, of Tamworth in the County of Warwick, Knt. a great admirer of our national antiquities.

But before I finally take my leave of our two preſent collectors, I will communicate an anecdote of *William Webb*, which is much to his credit as a writer; and yet is almoſt obſcured with the mantle of oblivion.—The ſtile of this itinerary in his deſcription of the ſeveral hundreds, is in poetic meaſure. In one place he favours us with the concluſion of an encomium upon Sir Hugh Cholmondeley in Latin and Engliſh verſe, and in another with ſome ſtanzas upon a grandſon of Sir John Savage; both compoſitions profeſſedly his own. This ſaid *William Webb*, "heretofore a clerk in the Mayor's court at Cheſter, and ſometime Under-Sheriff to Sir Richard Lea," hath left us in print, a very pleaſing, ingenious, and ſenſible account of the beauties and defects of Engliſh poetry (z)

 which

(z) The title runs thus: "A Diſcourſe of Engliſh Poetry: together with the Author's Judgment touching the Reformation of our Engliſh Verſe.—By William Webb, Graduate.—Imprinted at London, by John Charlewood, Quarto, 1586."

which he compoſed ſoon after he had taken his regular degree of Maſter of Arts.

Having mentioned the benevolent hands that reſcued theſe periſhing memorials from oblivion; I ought not to conceal, that DANIEL KING, a native of our palatinate, was the perſon they made choice of to give them birth. *King* had travelled into foreign parts; where he acquired the ingenious accompliſhments of *engraving* and *ſurveying*. And by the help of theſe, his acquired talents, he has embelliſhed his work with a variety of uſeful, curious, and ornamental ſculptures.—A cotemporary writer pays him this compliment upon his *creative* and *preſerving* talent of *engraving*—"That in proceſs of time, he hoped Daniel King might outſtrip the piety of King Edgar; erecting more abbies in *braſs*, than this monarch did in *ſtone*; though he is ſaid to have built as many as there are days in the year." And he concludes with this encomium in metre—

"KINGUS CESTRENSI, CESTRENSIS-PATRIA KINGO,
"*Lucem*, alternatim, *debet uterque* ſuam.

"CHESHIRE TO KING, and KING TO CHESHIRE, owes
"His *light*; ſince each *receives*, what each *beſtows*." *(a)*

But after all theſe extravagant encomiums, if the *obſtetric* hand of Daniel King had reduced the *unformed embrio-collections* of Smith and Webb, into ſome regularity of form and ſhape; by reducing the two parts into a methodical ſeries of hiſtory—this publication might have reflected rays of ſplendor upon our illuſtrious county. Whereas KING'S VALE-ROYAL, in its preſent ſtate of confuſion, notwithſtanding its *pompous title*, and notwithſtanding

(*a*) Fuller's Worthies of England, page 184.

ing it ſells for *four guineas*, is neither more nor leſs than—a mere *farrago* of valuable materials. And, what is worſe for the public, he has not only tranſpoſed ſome parts of the original labours of his two authors, but he has publiſhed from a very defective copy.

If the great Engliſh blood of Cheſhire, chief of men, ſhould have unhappily contracted thoſe infirmities of old age *(b)* as to have rendered them cold and indifferent to ſuch a future hiſtory of their PALATINATE, as may in ſome meaſure be equal to the grandeur of the deſign, and to the illuſtrious ſubject it is to treat of.

But now I have taken my leave of this famous *literary triumvirate*, I ſcarcely know where to turn myſelf. For the example and encouragement of our great antiquaries, *Camden*, *Cotton*, and *Spelman*, had raiſed ſuch an enthuſiaſtic paſſion for the ſtudy of our antiquities about this æra, that I might almoſt venture to call it the *Auguſtan age* of antiquarian writers. And indeed ſeveral of thoſe I am now going to commemorate, were rather cotemporaries to our laſt collectors, and to each other; than by any means capable of being reduced to a regular ſeries of chronological ſucceſſion.

Coeval then with the preceding, was *Laurence Boſtoke*, or, as he uſually ſtiled himſelf, from the place of his birth, and habitation, *de Boſtoke.(c)*

(*b*) ——— Gelidus, tardante ſenectâ,
Hebet Sanguis, frigentque eſſætæ in corpore vires.
Virg. Æn. v. ver. 395.

(*c*) "The river *Dan* then run by Boſtock; th' ancient ſeat "of the noble and knightly family of the Boſtocks. Whoſe "vaſt eſtates paſſed to John Savage, by a marriage with Anne "grand,

This local name having diſtinguiſhed one of the firſt families in the county, the materials he has left behind him are extremely valuable; and are contained in one Folio Volume, cloſely written, in a very bad hand. The articles are miſcellaneous; *deſcents*, *pedigrees*, *notes of families*, *extracts from old deeds and records*; and, what is above all, *an accurate viſitation of moſt of our Churches before that ſacrilegious deſtruction in the Civil War*. Whatever was remarkable here, he has attempted to delineate; but he was a bad draughtſman; and though his deſigns may be faithful repreſentations, yet they are by no means the work of an artiſt.

Cotemporary with *Laurence de Boſtoke* was *Sampſon Erdeſwicke*; who about the year 1553 laid the foundations of his future learning in a College at Oxford, which I ſhall always remember with reſpect and veneration. Properly ſpeaking he is the great antiquary of *Staffordſhire*; not barely as being a native, but as having principally collected for that county. The ſurvey of this, his native ſoil, has appeared in print; with an account of *Beeſton Caſtle in Cheſhire*, annexed to it. But that he deſigned us larger views, he himſelf aſſures us; and that in part he executed theſe views, the *collections* he has left behind him amply teſtify. In his printed ſurvey, he thus expreſſes himſelf to a friend: "Having diſpoſed with myſelf to take a further "view of the ſhires of Stafford and Cheſter, ac-"cording to promiſe; I have ſet down what I have "found, or can yet learn." And theſe *Cheſhire diſcoveries*,

a

"grand-daughter of Sir Adam de *Boſtock*, Knight." Camden's Britan. vol. i. page 677. Laurence always ſpelt his name *Boſtoke*.

diſcoveries, or at leaſt part of them, are ſtill preſerved in two pretty thick quarto, and two octavo manuſcripts The contents of theſe volumes, like thoſe of Laurence Boſtoke, are miſcellaneous. They are *deſcents*, *pedigrees*, *notes of families*, *a villare of the whole county*, *the names of all thoſe who held in capite*, *with the ancient revenue of the palatinate*; and, to crown all, *a variety of extracts from ancient charters*, *relative to the ſeveral grants of manors*; to which he has affixed *very fair draughts of an infinite number of curious ſeals*.

But having mentioned the *Nurſing-College* that ſupplied Erdeſwicke with the *milk* of polite literature, I ſhall give you an anecdote of the firſt exiſtence of our literary parent; which, agreeable to a former expreſſion, is entirely obſcured by the mantle of oblivion, even within the *circle of her own family*. The founders of *Brazen-Noſe College*, were *William Smith*, Biſhop of Lincoln, and Sir *Richard Sutton*. The latter of whom could pride himſelf with *William of Wickham*,(*d*) that if he was not himſelf a man of learning, he was determined to be the *means* of inſtilling it into others. And indeed the ſeveral *preſervers* of the *ancient glory* of our Palatinate, whom I am now commemorating, and who were the *academical ſons of ſcience*, imbibed the elements of polite literature, in this our venerable ſeminary, equally with Sampſon Erdeſwicke. The anecdote then is this; that the Biſhop *ſingly* formed the deſign and plan of our much reſpected College. But, upon exchanging this tranſitory for an immortal life, ſoon

(*d*) Founder of New College Oxford.

after he had laid the foundations of it; he entruſted the final completion of his grand intentions to his *executor* Sir Richard Sutton *(e)*. Who, with the *enlarged ſoul* of a *man of Cheſhire*, faithfully executed his truſt, by at leaſt *doubling* the Biſhop's bounty. And by this act of magnificence has given riſe to the following addreſs in verſe, from the *ſuppoſed* piety of his adopted child—

" *Begun* by one, but *finiſhed* by another;
" *Sutton* he was my *nurſe*; but *Smith* my *mother*.
" Or if the phraſe more proper ſeem, ſay rather—
" That *Sutton* was my *guardian*, *Smith* my *father*.
" 'Cauſe *equal kindneſs* they to me expreſt,
" Better I *neither* love; or, *both* the beſt.
" If *both* they may be call'd, who had *one will*;
" What one *deſign'd*, the other did *fulfil* *(f)*.

The reader will forgive me theſe *ſuppoſed* overflowings of *filial fondneſs* from our honored college, to her *munificent and literary parents*. And I muſt be loſt myſelf to every tender, and every refined emotion, if the ineſtimable benefits of an ingenuous education did not bind me, by all the ties of gratitude, to commemorate the liberality of thoſe hands, which have dealt out to me theſe ineſtimable benefits.

(e) " In the hundred of Macclesfield lies *Sutton:* which gave " *name*, and hath continued to be the ſeat of a family of great " worth and worſhip, the *Sutton*. Of this houſe of *Sutton*, was " that ever famous knight, and great patron of learning, Sir " *Richard Sutton*, one of the founders of the famous College " of *Brazen-Noſe* in Oxford. Where, by his bounty, much of " our *Cheſhire youth* receive moſt worthy education in all good " learning and true religion."

Vale-Royal, part 2d. page 86.

(f) Fuller's *Worthies of England*, page 182; who ſays, he received his intelligence from his "good friend, Dr. *Yates*, principal of Brazen-Noſe." A *Cheſhire man* of ſuch munificence, as to have deſerved from his ſociety the epithet of *Tertius, tantum non, fundator*.

benefits. Neither, I am ſure, will the *men of Cheſhire* imagine any pious memorials of Sir Richard Sutton, *foreign* to the deſign of a hiſtory of their county. Since his foſtering "Bounty "daily contributes to the inſtruction of many of "their *Cheſhire youth*, in all good learning, and "true religion." And, as I have already hinted, he has more particularly been the means of training up in the *groves of ſcience*,(g) every *academical preſerver* of the ancient glory of their palatinate.

To proceed then in my *chronological ſeries*. With *Erdeſwicke* and *Boſtock*, *Ralfe Starkie* was cotemporary: of the family of the *Starkies* of *Stretton*; a Stateſman, a Poet, and an Antiquary. His two firſt characters do not ſo immediately concern us; though, what can be a ſtronger evidence of the powers of the human mind, than to ſee the abilities of a *Burleigh*, a *Spencer*, and a *Camden*, all united in the ſame perſon! The Antiquarian collections of his, ſtill remaining, are the following: *Rolls of Cheſhire families*, 1595; *a book of alphabetical references to theſe rolls*; *and a book of references to Mr. Erdeſwicke's Cheſhire manuſcripts*. He has beſides given us, *all the royal grants of our Palatinate immunities*; *and an exact account of all the imports and exports from the harbour of Cheſter, during five years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth*, (h) *with the amount of the revenue ariſing from theſe port duties*. His *legacy*, however, of *Cheſhire collections*, would certainly have been more extenſive, if the jealouſy of *James*

(g) ——Inter Silvas *Academi* quarere Verum. HOR.
(h) From the 20th, to the 26th.

the Firſt had not iſſued a warrant for the ſeizure of all Mr. *Starkie's ſtate papers*; and, amongſt theſe, many of his *Antiquarian* ones periſhed. Sir Thomas Wilſon, ſecretary of ſtate, who executed this warrant, certifies the ſeizure of ſo large a number as 45 pacquets of Mr. Starkie's Papers.

I have mentioned our Antiquary in *two* of his ſuperior characters, permit me to ſpeak of him in his *third*; and to give you a ſingle ſtanza from his hiſtorical, political, and moral poem, addreſſed to his miſtreſs, Queen Elizabeth: The principal ſubject is the melancholy reign of Edward the ſecond; whoſe ghoſt is ſuppoſed to recount his ſeveral misfortunes in 581 ſtanzas—

" Why ſhou'd a waſted ſpirit ſpent in woe,
" Diſcloſe the wounds receiv'd within his breaſt?
" It's not enough, that fortune proves his foe,
" In whoſe ſad frowns is folded his un-reſt?
" It's not enough, to know himſelf diſtreſt?—
" Oh! no, ſurcharged hearts muſt needs complain:
" Some eaſe it is, though ſmall, to tell our pain."

I have given this ſpecimen diveſted of its antiquated ſpelling. And I muſt not conceal, for the honor of our antiquary, that this poem has, *in one inſtance*, been attributed to the great Spencer. It is mentioned with a *perhaps*; but it is moſt untruly conjectural. The poem is in Mr. Starkie's own hand writing; it has never been even *ſurmiſed* as Spencer's, by the ſeveral writers of his life; and a copy of it is now exiſting, with a variety of alterations and additions to move the compaſſion of James the firſt; the author ſtiles himſelf, *Infortunio*: as being the unfortunate Ralfe Starkie, that in 1619 had unhappily incurred the diſpleaſure of this jealous monarch; who aſcended the throne of

England

England at leaſt four years after the death of Edmund Spencer, which happened about 1588.

Ralfe Starkey was a name favourable to our antiquities. He wrote a very curious *heraldical manuſcript, formed from all the viſitations then in being; with fair draughts of old ſeals, coats, arms, and devices.* In the firſt page is the following remark; "This book is augmented in very many places "out of Mr. *Sampſon Erdeſwicke*, *Moth*, and "other good gatherings, by me *Ralfe Starkey* of "London, merchant; ſecond ſon of John Starkey "of Oltone, in the county of Cheſter, Eſq; 1610;" a lineal deſcent of which family has been left us by his name-ſake, *the antiquary*, under the deſcription of the family of Starkey of *Darley*, or *Olton-Lowe.* (*i*)

The next collector, is, *Roger Wilcoxon*, a member of the college of arms; who has left us two accurate manuſcripts in folio, relative to the *heraldical hiſtory of Cheſhire.* He compiled theſe volumes from every authentic voucher, and every original record, he could have recourſe to. And, in order to illuſtrate theſe his *genealogical tables, he has preſerved a great variety of inquiſitions poſt mortem, draughts of arms in our ancient manſions, and of ſeals appendant to old deeds; with many remarkable extracts from the private evidences of families.* But all theſe ſeveral delineations are executed with ſuch an elegance and exactneſs, as characterize Mr. Wilcoxon a complete draughtſman.

Our ſucceeding, or rather *ſtill* cotemporary, collectors form a family *harmonic-trio*; a father, ſon,

(*i*) "Starkies is at Dorle, a v miles from Northwich, a ſcant "mile from Oldeton, and a 3 miles from Vale-Royal." Leland's Itin. vol. vii. p. 32.

ſon, and grandſon, of the ſurname of *Chaloner*, and of the ſeveral chriſtian names, *Thomas*, *Jacob*, and *James*. Thomas was an arms-painter in Cheſter about 1594; he knew the value of learning ſufficiently to give his ſon a better education than he had received himſelf. And this ſon followed the ſame occupation in Cheſter, and made collections, about the year 1620. But it was James, the grandſon, who reflected the greateſt credit upon his family, by a very conciſe, accurate, and ſenſible account of the Iſle of Man, printed at the end of King's Vale-Royal in 1656. He laid the foundation of a learned education in our much honored college; and when the parliament inveſted Lord Fairfax with the ſeignory of *Man*, he was one of his Lordſhip's three commiſſioners for ſettling the affairs of that iſland.

The *antiquarian collections* of all three are valuable. But if a drop of water bears no proportion to the great ocean, it is not to be wondered at, that they ſhould be included and loſt in the immenſity of that collection which follows. This too was formed by another family *harmonic-trio*; a father, ſon, and grandſon, of the ſirname of *Holme* or *Holmes*, and all three of the chriſtian name of *Randal*. Take them for all in all, they were perhaps three of the moſt extraordinary, and the moſt pains-taking men that ever exiſted. Though of the ſame occupation with the Chaloners, they lived in the utmoſt degree of amity with them. Though in rather low circumſtances, they received the greateſt marks of honour and reſpect *(k)* from their

(*k*) Randal Holmes, the elder, was Mayor of Cheſter in 1633; and had the peculiar felicity of ſeeing his ſon Sheriff the

their fellow citizens. And though untinctured almoſt with letters, they have left the moſt noble collection of antiquarian learning, for one ſingle county, ever formed by man. To particulariſe this collection, would be writing a volume, rather than a ſketch. Their *literary labours* for our palatine *only*, exceed the almoſt incredible number of 268 *large volumes*. A collection of this nature is rather ſuited to a general topographical hiſtory of all England, than to one ſingle county. And amidſt this immenſe literary variety, this *dubia cæna* of antiquarianiſm, it would really have been diſtreſſing to have ſelected materials, if two *names* of great learning and abilities, had not already exerted themſelves, in forming a very ſenſible and accurate epitome of this collection.

The firſt was a phyſician, Dr. *Edward Williamſon*; who has digeſted the eſſence of this vaſt maſs into a regular *compend*, called *Villare Ceſtrienſe*. It is firſt of all ranged under the general head of hundreds, and then under the leſſer one of pariſhes. And whatever is curious and intelligent in the original papers, has been carefully preſerved by the abridger in a very thick quarto volume. The other epitomizer was a divine; Dr. *Francis Gaſtrel*, canon of Chriſt Church, Oxford, and Biſhop of our dioceſe of Cheſter. A name, great in the knowledge of theology, and of our national antiquities. His abridgment is ſtiled *notitia ceſtrienſis*. But the arrangement of this notitia, is rather an *eccleſiaſtical*,

the ſame year. Randal, the ſon, was Mayor in 1643; and hath left ſpeeches upon record, both on his entering into office, and on quitting it. Randal, the grandſon, was Sheriff of Cheſter in 1705.

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The *antiquarian collections* of all three are valuable. But if a drop of water bears no proportion to the great ocean, it is not to be wondered at, that they ſhould be included and loſt in the immenſity of that collection which follows. This too was formed by another family *harmonic-trio*; a father, ſon, and grandſon, of the ſirname of *Holme* or *Holmes*, and all three of the chriſtian name of *Randal*. Take them for all in all, they were perhaps three of the moſt extraordinary, and the moſt pains-taking men that ever exiſted. Though of the ſame occupation with the Chaloners, they lived in the utmoſt degree of amity with them. Though in rather low circumſtances, they received the greateſt marks of honour and reſpect *(k)* from their

(*k*) Randal Holmes, the elder, was Mayor of Cheſter in 1633; and had the peculiar felicity of ſeeing his ſon Sheriff the

their fellow citizens. And though untinctured almoſt with letters, they have left the moſt noble collection of antiquarian learning, for one ſingle county, ever formed by man. To particulariſe this collection, would be writing a volume, rather than a ſketch. Their *literary labours* for our palatine *only*, exceed the almoſt incredible number of 268 *large volumes*. A collection of this nature is rather ſuited to a general topographical hiſtory of all England, than to one ſingle county. And amidſt this immenſe literary variety, this *dubia cæna* of antiquarianiſm, it would really have been diſtreſſing to have ſelected materials, if two *names* of great learning and abilities, had not already exerted themſelves, in forming a very ſenſible and accurate epitome of this collection.

The firſt was a phyſician, Dr. *Edward Williamſon*; who has digeſted the eſſence of this vaſt maſs into a regular *compend*, called *Villare Ceſtrienſe*. It is firſt of all ranged under the general head of hundreds, and then under the leſſer one of pariſhes. And whatever is curious and intelligent in the original papers, has been carefully preſerved by the abridger in a very thick quarto volume. The other epitomizer was a divine; Dr. *Francis Gaſtrel*, canon of Chriſt Church, Oxford, and Biſhop of our dioceſe of Cheſter. A name, great in the knowledge of theology, and of our national antiquities. His abridgment is ſtiled *notitia ceſtrienſis*. But the arrangement of this notitia, is rather an *eccleſiaſtical*,

the ſame year. Randal, the ſon, was Mayor in 1643; and hath left ſpeeches upon record, both on his entering into office, and on quitting it. Randal, the grandſon, was Sheriff of Cheſter in 1705.

eccleſiaſtical, than a *civil* one. It relates to the whole dioceſe; is divided under the general head of archdeaconries, the leſſer one of deanries, and the ſtill leſs diviſion of pariſhes. Great, however, as the merit of his lordſhip was, it has been rendered ſtill greater, in being the happy, and the fortunate inſtrument of preſerving theſe invaluable papers. The executors of Randal Holmes, the grandſon, offered them in ſale to the corporation of Cheſter. But as the treaſury here, I ſuppoſe, was not rich; they might perhaps have gone into the market, (*l*) to have *embalmed* even *frankincenſe* and *odours*, if his lordſhip had not purchaſed them for the noble library of the then Earl of Oxford; and, eventually, for the mighty emolument of the public.

Now we are ſpeaking of *Biſhops of Cheſter*, I muſt mention two; who, by their collections, have been ornaments to the ſee. Dr. *John Bridgeman* in 1619, and Dr. *Nicholas Stratford* in 1689. The firſt hath left behind him, *a very accurate account of the revenues and endowments of the Church*, in a large folio volume; which goes under the title of *Biſhop Bridgeman's Ledger*. And he drew up a moſt excellent ſcheme for the revival of eccleſiaſtical diſcipline and order in his dioceſe; after that ſcene of anarchy and confuſion which had been occaſioned by the civil wars. The collections of the other conſiſt of *original letters*; which demonſtrate his Lordſhip to have been a man of conſummate buſineſs, candour, judgment, and reſolution. We are indebted for their preſervation to the care of that great antiquary, Biſhop Tanner. (*m*)

For

(*l*) Deferor in Vicum vendentem *Thus* et *Odores*. HOR.

(*m*) Thomas Tanner was conſecrated Biſhop of St. Aſaph, Jan. 23, 1731-2,

For the ſake of arranging theſe three ornaments of our church together, I have been guilty of the anachroniſm of a few years. I muſt therefore return, to celebrate the names of *Catherall*, *Vernon*, *Brereton*, *Booth*, *and Aſhmole*, as *Cheſhire collectors*. —The family of *Catherall* or *Caterall* is of Derbyſhire; and has run through the ſeveral names of Bulkeley and Bird. What has been left us under this family name, is compriſed in a folio volume with the following title—" *Caterall's Book* of the *Antiquity* and *Gentry* of *Cheſhire*."

Mr. *William Vernon* is one of our beſt antiquaries. He lived at Shakerley, in Lancaſhire, about the year 1630; but having conſiderable property at *Hulme*, in *Cheſhire*, he collected principally for the *hiſtory* of our *palatinate*. His books of antiquarian reſearches appear, with ſome degree of probability, to have been ſo numerous, as to have for their marks of diſtinction the ſeveral letters of the alphabet. Liber C, D, and R, or at leaſt the ſubſtance of them, are in being. But whether the others are periſhed, or rather, whether they ever exiſted, is at this time of day uncertain. The materials, that compoſe theſe remaining books, are very valuable. They conſiſt of, *extracts from diverſe remarkable deeds of the antient Earls of Cheſter*; *extracts from other authentic inſtruments, and original records*; *deſcents and anecdotes of families*; *with a variety of curious particulars relative to ſeveral towns and pariſhes in the county*. That his intelligence, in theſe reſpects, might be the more accurate and complete, Mr. Vernon was indefatigable in his inquiries; and he has very gatefully preſerved

preſerved the names of thoſe *Cheſhire gentlemen*, (*n*) who favoured him with any material information.

Sir *William Brereton*, of Honford, is a collector only by accident. He repreſented our county in the long Parliament. And though he had been a royal ward, yet he bore arms againſt his guardian and ſovereign, by accepting the poſt of General of the Parliament-forces, in Cheſhire and the adjoining counties. My Lord Clarendon, (*o*) in ſeveral parts of his hiſtory, has ſtrongly and accurately marked the different genius of the two parties at that time. The royaliſts were open, incautious, diſſipated, and intrepid. The Parliamentarians were cloſe, wary, ſober in their manners, and extremely attentive to every opportunity of advantage. Of this we have the ſtrongeſt proof in the *Journals* of Sir *William Brereton*; a very accompliſhed gentleman, and, upon the whole, very unexceptionable in his command. There is ſcarcely a circumſtance during the four years he was General, that he did not commit to writing; and not even a ſingle letter appears to have been penned, of which he did not preſerve a copy. The fruits of this indefatigable induſtry are collected into *five folio volumes*; written in a ſmall, but very fair hand.

Coeval with Sir William Brereton was Mr. *John Booth*, of Twamlowe; a very intelligent and careful

(*n*) *Merburie* of *Merburie*, *Dutton* of *Dutton*, Sir Edmund Fitton, John Millington, Peter Daniel, William Harecourt, John Oldfield, Downes of Shrigley, Cotton of Cotton, Sir John Davenport, John Booth, and Henry Manwaring of the Tower of London.

(*o*) Hiſtory of the Rebellion, 8vo. vol. iii. page 345, *et paſſim.*

ful collector. The ſenſible *author of Bucklow hundred* had the free uſe of his materials; and he has preſerved the nature of their contents, by making frequent references to their authority. In one place he calls them, *(p)* "John Booth of Twam-"lowe's Book of Pedigrees;" and in another, *(q)* "John Booth of Twamlowe's Book of his own "Collections." After this account of them, any thing further from my pen becomes unneceſſary.

We come next to *Elias Aſhmole.* A name conſpicuous in the republic of letters; as having been the munificent founder of the Muſeum at Oxford. We owe his collections to a viſitation of this county by the celebrated Dugdale; afterwards Sir William, and at that time Norroy King at Arms. The friendſhip of Aſhmole, for his future father-in-law, influenced him to accompany Dugdale in this viſitation. And his thirſt after knowledge, and antiquities, has exerted itſelf during this viſit, in preſerving a great variety of very curious particulars. *The draughts of antient ſeals, arms, monuments, and* Feneſtral *antiquities—both civil* and *ſacred*—he hath bequeathed us; are in reality ſo many elegant pictures, as well as ſo many faithful repreſentations. And the remains of that moſt ſuperb manſion of the Delves's at Doddington, would have conveyed to us very little idea of its antient grandeur, if ſome parts of it had not ſtill exiſted, by the means of Aſhmole's immortalizing pencil.

There is a group, however, of noble *ſtatues* ſtill remaining there, which are too ſplendidly glorious in themſelves, and too much for the honour of our palatinate, to be paſſed over in ſilence. I mean thoſe

(p) Page 218, line 16.—(q) Page 257, line 31.

thoſe of the valiant *Lord Audley*, and his *four* celebrated *eſquires*. My Lord Audley's is moſt probably an original one; but I ſhould ſuppoſe the other four to be rather coeval with the æra of this ſuperb manſion; the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Theſe ſtatues are as large as life; and are ſuppoſed to repreſent *Delves* of *Doddington*, Dutton of Dutton, Foulſhurſt of Crewe, *(q)* and Hawkeſton of Wrine-hill. Though this laſt, as well as Lord Audley, had poſſeſſions in Staffordſhire, yet, properly ſpeaking, they were *all five men of Cheſhire*, by birth, family, and inheritance. It was principally owing to the value of theſe illuſtrious warriors, that our moſt puiſſant hero, Edward the Black Prince, *Earl of Cheſter*, gained the immortal battle of Poictiers, in the year 1356. The particulars of Lord Audley's exploits, in that battle, are thus related by our hiſtorians:—

" But the moſt remarkable inſtance of honour " and valour, was the Lord James Audley; who, " having vowed to be the *foremoſt* of the battle, " performed his word, and confirmed it with many " wounds; for which the Prince having rewarded " him with five hundred marks a year, fee-ſimple " in England, he preſently gave it to four of his " eſquires, who had underwent the ſame dangers " with him. The Prince knowing it, aſked him, " Whether he did not accept his gift? He an-

" anſwered

(q) A very fine altar-tomb of alabaſter to the memory of a *Foulſhurſt* of *Crewe*; and, tradition ſays, this very *Foulſhurſt* is ſtill remaining in the chancel of Bartomley church, in Cheſhire. The recumbent effigy upon the tomb, in complete armour at full length, is viſibly of the ſame age with the ſtatue of Lord Audley.

" ſwered, *Yes! but thoſe men had deſerved it as* " *well as he had himſelf; and had more need of it.* " The Prince was pleaſed with this reply, and gave " him five hundred marks more; as if he reſolved " that ſo much worth ſhould not go unreward- " ed." *(w)* And my Lord Audley, as a further and *perpetual* memorial of their merit, enjoined them to bear in ſome part of their coat of arms, *his own proper atchievement—Gules a Fret Or.*— Which honourable injunction has been conſtantly obſerved by theſe *four diſtinguiſhed families.*

This illuſtrious inſtance of *Cheſhire proweſs*, and *Cheſhire heroiſm*, is not a *ſingular* one in the annals of Engliſh hiſtory; ſince the genuine character of our county has been as much marked for *martial glory*, as for *unbounded hoſpitality.* And if the reader ſhould miſtruſt that *partial* fondneſs which ariſes from the place of our nativity, and which always plays around the human heart; he may take the unbiaſſed ſentiments of that admired poet, *Michael Drayton*; *(x)* who thus celebrates the *royal* magnanimity of our *palatinate:*

" Of all our *counties*, *ſhe* the place of *palatine* doth hold;
" And *thereto* hath her *high regalities* enroll'd.
" Beſides in many *fields*, ſince *conquering William* came,
" Her *people* ſhe hath prov'd, to her *eternal fame.*
" All, *children* of her *own*, the *leader* and the *led*;
" The mightieſt men of bone, in her full boſom bred." *(y)*

And the ſame poet, in a ſucceeding ſtanza, ingenuouſly confeſſes, that the conqueſt of the imperial crown of France, was chiefly owing to the *bills* and *bows* of the hardy *Cheſhire yeomanry*:—

(w) Complete Hiſtory of England, vol. i. page 226.
(x) " Michael Drayton was born at Hartſhill, in the pariſh " of Atherſton, in Warwickſhire, 1563." *Biogr. Britan.*
(y) Poly-Olb. ſong xi. ver. 10, et ſeq.

" Their *yeomanry*, *they ſtill* endeavour to *uphold*:
" For rightly, whilſt *herſelf*, *brave England* was of *old*;
" And our *courageous Kings* us forth to *conquſt* led—
" Our armies in thoſe times ne'er thro' the world ſo dread!
" Of our *tall yeomen*, were, and *footmen*, for the moſt;
" Who, with their *bills* and *bows*, may confidently boaſt,
" Our *Leopards*, (z) they ſo *long*, and *bravely*, did advance
" Above the *Flower de Lys*, ev'n in the *heart* of *France*." (a)

And among the number of thoſe *Cheſhire heroes* of antiquity, who have planted the *banners* of *England* even in the very *heart of France*; the names of Sir *Hugh Calveley* and Sir *Robert Knowles* are much too illuſtrious in our annals to be omitted. The great *Camden* thus characterizes the firſt of them:—" At ſome further diſtance, " on the Weſt ſide of the river Weaver, ſtands " *Calveley*; which has given both *ſeat* and *name* " to that noble family, the *Calveleys*. Of whom, " in Richard the Second's time, was Sir *Hugh de* " *Calveley*; who, in *France*, had the reputation of " ſo valiant a ſoldier, that *nothing* was held *im-* " *pregnable* to his *courage* and *conduct*." *(b)* And it was not only in the field of battle, that we find him this *invincible* commander; ſince the *Queen* of *Arragon* became captivated by his *irreſiſtible* attractions, and reſigned her hand to his at the altar of Hymen; as the joint quartering of their *united arms* upon Sir *Hugh's tomb* inconteſtibly confirms. But

(z) Poly-Olb. ſong xi. ver. 27, et ſeq.

(a) " He well calls the *coat of England leopards*: *lions* and " *leopards* in *princely acceptation* have been taken *indifferently*." *Selden's Notes on Poly-Olb.*

(b) Camden's Britannia, vol. i. page 675.——Five ſeveral inſtances of the moſt heroic atchievements of this Sir Hugh Calveley are recorded by Fuller, in his *Worthies of England*, page 179.

But however celebrated Sir *Hugh Calveley* may be in the records of military fame; he is at leaſt equalled by his valiant aſſociate, Sir *Robert Knowles*; who was advanced, from the rank of a common ſoldier, to the moſt *diſtinguiſhed ſtation*, by that excellent judge of military merit, our renowned Edward the Third. The faith of hiſtory repreſents the atchievements of Sir Robert, almoſt in the ſtile and manner of romantic chivalry; "that when he "commanded in France, under our puiſſant Mo-"narch, he drove the enemy before him like flocks "of ſheep; and battered down their citadels into "ſuch *ſpiry* and *forked* ruins, that for ſeveral years "afterwards they went by the name of *Knowles's* "*Mitres*." His laſt act of proweſs was the ſuppreſſion of *Wat Tyler*. And then, full of years and glory, he reſigned his breath to a *ſuperior enemy*, the great conqueror of human nature; *(c)* leaving behind him this accompliſhed character: that his *charity* was equal to his *valour*; and that he was as much endeared to the *Engliſh*, as he was dreaded by the *French*.

But it is not only the *Gallic Nation* which has had reaſon to dread the valour of our *countrymen*; the *Scots* too may rue the day wherein they experienced the irreſiſtible force and power of *their* arms. For when Lord Hertford, afterwards Duke of Somerſet, vanquiſhed the Scotch army, and

(c) Aug. 15, 1407.—His acts of charitable munificence, are the following: the ſtone bridge at Rocheſter in Kent, with a chapel and chantry at the eaſt end of it; a college and hoſpital at Pontefract in Yorkſhire, which he endowed with 180l. per annum; and a hoſpital at Rome for the entertainment of Engliſh pilgrims.———Lambert's Kent, Edit. 1596, page 392. Weaver's Fun. Mon. page 436. Fuller's Worth. page 179.

took their *capital*, in that rapid expedition which he made into the heart of Scotland, he thought the gallant behaviour of the *Cheſhire ſoldiers* entitled them to ſome ſuperior marks of honour and diſtinction. And he accordingly *knighted eighteen* gentlemen of that county, upon the *very ſpot*, which had ſo lately been the witneſs of their valour. (*d*)

Here I could have wiſhed to have finally completed the career of their military fame. But the ſad tale of truth forces me to add; that, in thoſe *domeſtic* and *inteſtine* wars between the houſes of *York* and *Lancaſter*, the intrepid courage of our *countrymen*, proved almoſt as fatal to *themſelves*, as it had ever done to their foreign enemies. The admired poet, whom I have ſo frequently quoted, I am afraid even to *ſatiety*, thus beautifully paints their fraternal fury in his deſcription of the battle of Blore-Heath.

" There (*e*) *Dutton*, *Dutton* kills; a *Done* doth kill a *Done*;
" A *Booth*, a *Booth*; and *Leigh* by *Leigh* is overthrown;
" A *Venables*, againſt a *Venables* doth ſtand;

" And

(*d*) At *Leith* in Scotland, on the 11th of May, 1544. Take the names of them alphabetically—

William Brereton, Roger Brereton, Urian Brereton, Hugh Calveley, Hugh Cholmondeley, William Davenport, Philip Egerton, Richard Egerton, Thomas Holford, John Legh, Piers Legh, Raufe Leyceſter, John Maſſey, Edmund Savage, Edward Savage, Laurence Smith, Thomas Venables, Edward Warren.

And the ſucceeding day he created ſeven more of them Eſqrs. by honouring them with the enſigns peculiar to that rank—a collar of SS about their necks, and a pair of *ſilver ſpurs*. Their names were; Richard Birkenhead, Roger Boydel, Thomas Cowper, Hugh Dutton, Raufe Leech, William Sneed, Adam Troutbeck.

(*e*) This battle was fought in 1459, at Blore-Heath in Staffordſhire. Lord Audley commanded the *Lancaſtrians*, and the Earl of Saliſbury the *Yorkiſts*; who gained a complete victory.

" And *Troutbeck* fighteth with a *Troutbeck*, hand to hand:
" There *Molineux* doth make a *Molineux* to die;
" And *Egerton* the ſtrength of *Egerton* doth try.

" Oh, *Cheſhire*, wert thou mad! of thine own *native gore*,
" So much, until this day, thou never ſhed'ſt before!
" Above *two thouſand* men, upon the earth were thrown,
" Of whom the greateſt part, were *naturally* thine *own*!(*f*)

Such, *once* was, the martial proweſs of the *men* of *Cheſhire!* And ſuch, I have no doubt, it would be again, if their *country* called them forth into the field of glory. (*g*) But having barely hinted at this part of their *provincial character*, in the beginning of this letter; my ſketch of hiſtoric materials muſt have been incomplete, if I had not marked them as much for their *military fame*, as for their *unbounded hoſpitality* of yore. Beſides, if *muſic*'s charms

" Can ſoften rocks, or bend the knotted oak,"

what *human* mind can be ſo entirely diveſted of every humane ſentiment, as, at the ſight or mention of thoſe *Statues*(*h*) at Doddington, not to reflect and deſcant with uncommon pleaſure upon the heroic acts of thoſe illuſtrious worthies.

(*f*) Drayton's Poly-Olb. ſong xxii.

(*g*) Upon the firſt embodying of the *Militia* in the late war, there were more gentlemen of rank and fortune in the *Cheſhire Corps*, than in any other Militia-regiment throughout the kingdom: Who ſubmitted, for many months, to the diſagreeable duty of guarding the lines at Brompton near Chatham; and ſeveral of them made their marches on foot, equally with the meaneſt ſoldier.

(*h*) " Cum majorum *Imagines* intuerentur, vehementiſſime " ſibi animum ad vertutem accendi. Scilicet, non *Ceram* illam, " neque *Figuram*, tantam Vim in ſeſe habere; ſed memoria " rerum geſtarum eam flammam egregiis Viris in Pectore creſ- " cere; neque prius ſedari, quam Virtus eorum famam atque " gloriam adæquaverit."

Salluſt Bell. Jugurth. ſect 4.

But—" Why ſhould *warriours* all our praiſe engroſs?" ſince the milder glories of the ſons of *peace*, are infinitely more beneficial to mankind? I ſhall therefore reſume my *chronological ſeries* with a *name*, the moſt diſtinguiſhed in the literary and peaceful annals of our hiſtorical collectors. The whole choir of whom ought to riſe with due obeyſance, to the venerable perſon I am now enrolling in their number—

Ut Gallo, Phæbi Chorus aſſurrexerit Omnis.

This accompliſhed perſonage is Sir *Peter Leyceſter*, the celebrated author of the *antiquities of Cheſhire*, publiſhed in 1672. Our much reſpected *literary parent* received every mark of gratitude, and every poſſible degree of honour, from this her diſtinguiſhed *ſon*. In a *manuſcript* note to an *enlarged* and *corrected* copy of his antiquities, he expreſſes himſelf thus under the pariſh of *Mobberley*. " Samuel Shipton, M. A. Rector of Mobberley, " died in 1670; an honeſt, learned gentleman! " who was my *tutor* whilſt I was of Brazen-Noſe " College, Oxford, in the years 1631—2—3." And in other parts of his *manuſcript additions*, he ſpeaks, with extreme pleaſure, " of his having " been for ſome years, he hopes, the *not unworthy* " member of a ſociety, which is entitled to ſo " much veneration from our palatinate." It ought not, however, to be concealed, that theſe *antiquities of Cheſhire*, publiſhed by Sir Peter, have been much complained of for the unentertaining and unintereſting manner in which they are written. But notwithſtanding a ſeeming harſhneſs that may perhaps appear in them, they have really an infinite degree of intrinſic merit. And the *manuſcript collections*

collections this very able and accurate hiſtorian hath left behind him, reflect almoſt as much honour on his literary character, as the antiquities he has publiſhed. They extend at leaſt to the vaſt number of *twenty volumes*. And, as *Leyceſter* will always be a *name*, conſecrated to learning and our national antiquities; it hath been aſſerted, ſeemingly with ſome degree of truth, that Sir Peter collected for *all* the ſeveral hundreds. My own opinion is, that he did not collect for them *profeſſedly*. But his *manuſcript remains* certainly relate to, and extend over, the whole county. They contain a prodigious fund of very valuable intelligence; and will greatly tend to the completion of his *favourite wiſh*, at the concluſion of his hiſtory of Bucklow hundred. "Thus have I, by God's aſſiſtance, run "through Bucklow hundred; according to ſuch "evidences and records as I had carefully collect-"ed concerning the ſame. If I had not met with "ſome obſtructions by ſome gentlemen, who, "either out of *waywardneſs* or *jealouſy*, did refuſe "to let me have the peruſal of their evidences, "ſome things might poſſibly have been further diſ-"covered and illuſtrated. In the mean time, I wiſh "*this* may incite ſome more able hand to under-"take the like for the reviving of *thoſe decayed* "*monuments of antiquity in the other hundreds of* "*this our county*, which yet lie buried and covered "in the rubbiſh of devouring time." (*i*)

The

(*i*) Sir Peter Leyceſter, Bart. was deſcended from Sir Nicholas de Leyceſter, Lord of the Manor of *Nether-Tabley*, in 1276. Where this diſtinguiſhed family has flouriſhed ever ſince. Sir Peter was born in 1613, and died in 1678.

The ſucceeding collector to Sir Peter Leyceſter, is *Roger Wilbraham*, of *Townes-End*, in the pariſh of Namptwich. This family name is undoubtedly *local*, and was more anciently written *Wilburham*. They are deſcendants, by the female line, from one of the *nobles* of Hugh Lupus; Richard Vernon, Baron of Shipbroke. (*k*) And the *Townes-End branch* derives its ſtem from *Randal*, the ſecond ſon of Thomas Wilbraham of Woodhay, in the reign of Henry the Fourth. Our great antiquary, in his *Britannia*, (*l*) thus deſcribes this ancient family. "Hence, the Weaver continues "its courſe ſouthward, not far from *Woodhay*; "where the famous and knightly family of the "*Wilburhams* lived long in great repute." (*m*) The collections Mr. Wilbraham left behind him *principally relate to the town and diſtrict of Namptwich*; and ſufficiently demonſtrate the induſtry and attention with which he proſecuted his *antiquarian reſearches*. As he was bleſſed with the *inheritance of wiſdom*—length of days in his right hand, and in his left hand riches and honour (*n*)—it is by no means matter of ſurpriſe, that his *literary remains* upon this ſubject are as complete as we could poſſibly have wiſhed them.

Cotemporary with *Roger Wilbraham*, was an ingenious collector of the name of *Harrington*; whoſe family, though now no more, had *once* conſiderable

(*k*) King's Vale Royal, part 2d. page 145.

(*l*) Vol. i. page 674.

(*m*) The heireſs of the Wilbrahams of Woodhay carried the whole eſtate, by marriage, into the family of Talmache, Earl of Dyſart.

(*n*) He died in the year 1705, at the *advanced* age of eighty-five.

ſiderable property at Urdeſhall. His collections have been conſigned to fame by the celebrated Biſhop Gibſon, in his firſt edition of the *Britannia (o)* His lordſhip there tells us—" that the " defects of *Doddridge*, and others, in tracing the " origin of the *county palatine*, are in a great " meaſure ſupplied by *what* the *learned* Mr. Har- " rington has left upon the ſubject. A gentleman, " by whoſe death, learning in general, and *parti-* " *cularly the antiquities of this county*, *which he* " *had deſigned to illuſtrate and improve*, have ſuf- " fered greatly." And upon this head, I am ſorry to ſympathize with this venerable prelate, in moſt ſincerely lamenting, that all my enquiries after Mr. Harrington's *Cheſhire illuſtrations*, have not been able to diſcover the leaſt veſtige where any of his *learned treaſures* may lie concealed.

My chronological ſeries brings me now to the collectors of our *age* and *century*. At the head of whom ſtands, deſervedly, the Rev. Mr. John Stones, late minor canon of our cathedral, and rector of Coddington in Cheſhire. His collections are included in one folio, and two thick quarto, volumes. But it is not the *bulk*, ſo much as the *value*, of the materials we are to attend to. And Mr. Stones appears to have been a perſon of ſuch conſummate judgment, with ſuch an intimate knowledge of his ſubject, as to have collected nothing from the *antiquarian mine*, except *ore* of the richeſt and the pureſt *gold*. Theſe valuable materials, the friendſhip of his ſon, and the obliging favour of the learned dean and chapter, have kindly entruſted to my peruſal and fidelity.

Mr.

(o) Camden Brit. (Edit. 1695) page 566.

Mr. Stone's ſucceſſor, in our chronological ſeries, was John Warburton, Somerſet herald; whoſe indefatigable labours have ſo greatly contributed to the ornament and illuſtration of almoſt every county in the kingdom. His method was perhaps *ſingularly* ſenſible—to glean up every thing, either in *print* or *manuſcript*, which had the moſt diſtant relation to that particular county he intended to elucidate. Theſe ſcattered fragments, like the *Sybils' Leaves*, he bound up in volumes ſuitable to the ſize of the papers he had collected; either folio, quarto, or octavo. It is ſcarcely worth while to particularize his *printed* fragments, relative to our palatinate: An abſtract of his manuſcript collections is as follows. "A calendar of the *manors* in Cheſhire, "with the ſeveral *fees* the Lords of the ſaid manors "paid to the *Earl of Cheſter*; and the *names* of the "*proprietors* to the year 1710, *quarto*. An account of the *principal families* in Cheſhire, with "the *lands they held* in the ſaid county, from the "33d of Edward the Third, to the 24th of Henry "the Seventh, *folio*. A regiſter of the *Black* "*Prince*, and *homage* due to the *Earl of Cheſter*; "with the names of the *principal families*, *Lords* "*of manors*, *lordſhips*, &c. from the 3d of Edward the Third, to the 29th of Elizabeth, *folio*. "A variety of maps, plans, and proſpects; with "manuſcript notes by Plot, Warburton, and others; "and whatſoever is curious in the repoſitories of "the *Herald's Office*, the *Harleian Library*, and "the *Office of Record*, relative to the county palatine of Cheſter."

What has been ſaid of the preceding *collections*, may be applied to *thoſe* I ſhall next commemorate.

As

As phyſic is a profeſſion, ſomehow or other, congenial with antiquities; the late Dr. *Gower*, of Cheſter, who died in 1745, hath left us many *curious and ſenſible remarks* upon this ſubject.(*p*) But his remarks are detached, deſultory, and unconnected.

We have another very able, but much more induſtrious *collector*; Dr. *Cowper* of Overley, Fellow of the Antiquary Society, and Mayor of Cheſter in 1754. His *collections chiefly relate to the city, and its environs; are digeſted into annals, after the manner of Peck's Stamford, and are ſufficiently numerous to be arranged in three folio volumes.*(*q*) Had the Doctor enjoyed a longer period of exiſtence, we might have expected a complete and diffuſive hiſtory of our native city. But ſince—Diis aliter viſum eſt—we have only to lament, that a diffidence, inſeparable from learning, ſhould have abſolutely prohibited any peruſal of his large collections. Eſpecially too after the ſpecimen he has given us in *print* of his antiquarian abilities—" in " his ſummary of the life, and of the celebrated " *ſhrine*, of St. Werburgh."

The laſt collector I ſhall mention, is a late *worthy Recorder* of the city of Cheſter—R. Wilbraham; who was a warm and zealous friend to all its *corporate* rights, and to the whole circle of its intereſts. Of this he has left behind him ample proofs, in his *collections*. It is true, theſe collections

(*p*) The late Dr. Gower had one of the moſt elegant and beſt digeſted collections of medals of any gentleman in Cheſhire.

(*q*) This intelligence about the contents of Dr Cowper's collections, comes from his intimate friend, Mr. Norris, ſecretary to the Society of Antiquaries.

tions are not copious; but then their deſign and purport have ſtamped ſuch an ineſtimable value on them, as to make us earneſtly wiſh they had extended beyond a ſingle folio volume. While our earlieſt records are either now ſleeping in profound obſcurity, or mouldering away in their ſecure repoſitory of the caſtle; they will yet live in the *Recorder's copy, by the means of thoſe very ſenſible and judicious extracts he has made from them.* And, to crown the whole of his laborious reſearches, *he has added a gloſſary, ingeniouſly explaining all the antiquated words and phraſes that occur in the originals.*

Having now done with the *human*, or, if you pleaſe, the *animate* collectors of our county evidences, I ſhall proceed to mention a few, which I will venture to call the *inanimate* ones. I mean thoſe family manſions, that, by the *die of chance*, have been conſecrated to the preſervation of Cheſhire antiquities. The few I ſhall commemorate, are the manſions of *Crew*, *Dutton*, and *Merbury*; not, as the only *Cheſhire repoſitories*, but I believe the principal ones; and which contained a variety of deeds and records, beyond the private evidences of their own lords and maſters. Theſe very ancient manſions have given *local* names to as many ancient and diſtinguiſhed families. And that *Crewhall* ſhould have been the *tutelary preſerver of antiquarian treaſures*, we can ſcarcely wonder; when, above a century ago, Mr. *Ranulph Crew* reſcued, from their periſhable ſtate, the firſt memorials we have in *print* of the former ſplendour of our palatinate.(r)

This

(r) See page 24.

This accompliſhed gentleman excelled to that degree in the polite arts, and particularly in *drawing*, that his *geographical delineations* were impoſſible to be diſtinguiſhed from the beſt *engraved* maps. And, unhappily for his native county! the very means he made uſe of for the improvement and extenſion of his accompliſhments, turned out the melancholy inſtruments of his ruin, having been barbarouſly aſſaſſinated at Paris in the year 1656.

I have already told you, that this amiable young man was the grandſon of Sir Ranulph Crew, Lord Chief Juſtice of the Court of King's-Bench in 1624, who was not more diſtinguiſhed by his knowledge in the laws of his country, than by his ſuperior ſkill in *architecture*. Of this, the pleaſing and elegant ſtructure of Crew-hall will remain an indiſputable proof, as long as the moſt beautiful ancient manſion, perhaps, in the whole kingdom ſhall exiſt. And, what is much more for his Lordſhip's character, the *virtues* of his *heart* were at leaſt equal to the *abilities* of his *head*. Since he was honourably diſcharged from all his *legal employments(ſ)*, for declaring his utter and determined diſlike to a meaſure, the moſt diſagreeable at that time to his country(*t*). Sir Ranulph's deſcendant, John Crew, Eſquire, inherits his Lordſhip's

(*ſ*) November 10, 1626.

(*t*) My Lord Clarendon expreſſes his diapprobation of the expedient of *ſhip-money* in the following nervous manner—"And "here the damage and miſchief cannot be expreſſed, that the "crown and ſtate ſuſtained in the deſerved reproach and infamy "that attended the Judges, by being made uſe of in *this*, and like "acts of power; there being no poſſibility to preſerve the digni-"ty, reverence, and eſtimation of the laws themſelves, but by "the integrity and innocency of the Judges."

Hiſt. of the Rebell. vol. i. page 70.

ſhip's diſtinction in the county, as well as his large fortunes, being one of its preſent repreſentatives. And he has ſhewed as much taſte in the beautiful arrangement and diſpoſition of his *grounds*, as his illuſtrious anceſtor diſplayed in the conſtruction of this pleaſing edifice. Thus uniting in the ſame family thoſe grand exertions of taſte, which Mr. Pope thought ſufficient honour to be enjoyed ſeparate and diſtinct—

Who *plants* like Bathurſt, and who *builds* like Boyle?

But of the *three manſions*, which I have been bold enough to diſtinguiſh by the name of *inanimate collectors*, I apprehend the edifice and *hall of Dutton*, during the flouriſhing æra of that moſt reſpectable and ſuperb family, to have been the principal aſylum of our fugitive and periſhable records. The fate of this family muſt neceſſarily remind us of the uncertainty of all human grandeur. Since after deriving their deſcent from *Odard*, coeval and conſanguineous with the *Norman conqueror*, their name and family is no more. And we may weep over their manés in the ſame accents of generous piety, as the downfal of the ſtate of Ilium is lamented—

"That corn now grows, where *Troy* town ſtood."

For what circumſtance can be more humiliating to terreſtrial magnificence, than the reflection—that after they had flouriſhed in the very ſpot where *Odard* had firſt ſeated them, "a family of great "worth and antiquity, and as it were almoſt a "conſtant ſucceſſion of knights for above ſix hun-"dred years,"*(u)* the remembrance of them ſhould now

(u) Hiſtory of Bucklow Hundred, page 248, line 34.

now as effectually have vaniſhed, as that of " a " gueſt which had tarried only a ſingle day." Their great progenitor too, the famous Odard, like his kinſman *Hugh Lupus*, had a celebrated *ſword of dignity*, conſtantly preſerved at Dutton, as an *heir-loom* of the family. Which, in the year 1665, was the property of Lady Kilmorey, ſole daughter and heireſs of Thomas Dutton, of Dutton,*(v)* Eſq. But many of their valuable records are equally as uncertain as that of this ſword of dignity. Since it is not to be imagined, that the ſame careleſs hand which diſſipated their large poſſeſſions, would preſerve their *literary remains*; and, alas! to him—their uſeleſs and moſt inſignificant of trifles. But *chance*, in this inſtance at leaſt, has been more favourable than *deſign*. Some of them are now in the poſſeſſion of the preſent worthy Mr. Leeche, of Carden.

What has been ſaid of the great family of *Dutton*, may be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the family of *Merbury*. Though they flouriſhed for many centuries, in the higheſt degree of reputation and

(v) There was a privilege of *licenſing the minſtrels*, peculiar to this antient family, much too remarkable to be omitted. The *original grant* came from our *renowned Earl*, *Randal Blundeville*, to *Roger Lacy*, *conſtable* of Cheſter; and his ſon, John Lacy, aſſigned the privilege to the family of *Dutton*. The anniverſary of this ſolemnity was conſtantly celebrated on the feſtival of St. John the Baptiſt, by a regular proceſſion of all the *minſtrels* to the church of this tutelary ſaint in the city of Cheſter. But after having been conſtantly obſerved for at leaſt 550 years, it ſeems to have been diſcontinued in 1758. And as an inſtance how ſacred thoſe *excluſive privileges*, which had been granted to us by our *Cheſhire monarchs*, were eſteemed by legiſlative wiſdom; the act of the 29th of Elizabeth, which declares all *itinerant minſtrels* to be *vagabonds*, particularly excepts the minſtrel-juriſdiction of *John Dutton*, of *Dutton*, in *Cheſhire*, Eſq.

and of honour; yet their poſſeſſions, and their papers, have long ſince paſſed into other hands. But I have many reaſons to imagine, that the original *Ledger-book(w)* of the magnificent Abbey of Vale-Royal, whilom in the poſſeſſion of the Merburies, is now in the library of my valuable and moſt eſteemed friend, *Thomas Cholmondeley*, Eſq. of Vale-Royal, the late amiable and public-ſpirited repreſentative of Cheſhire.

Here then ends the completion of my ſhort, but very imperfect, account of the characteriſtic genius of the *Men of Cheſhire*, and of the collections for a hiſtory of our palatinate, in a ſeries almoſt ſtrictly chronological. From theſe collections, and other ineſtimable remains, I am convinced a hiſtory might be formed of our native county, infinitely ſuperior to any hiſtory, yet exiſting, of any county in Great Britain. Or, if you pleaſe, a hiſtory that ſhall as much excel Dugdale's Warwickſhire, *as this celebrated hiſtory* is ſuppoſed to excel *thoſe* of all our provincial diſtricts. Since at preſent it certainly ranks amongſt them in the ſame diſtinguiſhed manner, as the "Moon is poetically ſaid to ſhine "amongſt the leſſer luminaries."

Population is not barely the ornament, and the ſplendour—it is the poſitive baſis of every empire. ROMULUS, therefore, in order to furniſh his new city with inhabitants, opened an *aſylum* for the fugitives of all nations. LUPUS did the ſame.—

But,

(w) "The Ledger-book of Vale-Royal Abbey, now in poſ-"ſeſſion of Thomas Merbury, of Merbury, nigh Great Bud-"worth, Eſq. 1666. A copy whereof remains among the evi-"dences at Dutton."

Hiſt. of Bucklow Hund p. 220, l. 18.

But, as his territories were much more extenſive than even thoſe of the *Empreſs of the World*, in her days of infancy, and as they had been greatly depopulated by the ravages of war; inſtead of *one*, he opened *three aſyla*, for the umbrage and protection of any new ſubjects, that might take ſhelter under the cover of his wings. Theſe *three aſyla* were, *Hoole-Heath* near Cheſter, *Over-Marſh* near Frodſham, and *Rud-Heath* near Middlewich. Their ſituation was moſt happily imagined. *Two* of them near the confines of Wales—where the addition of every ſingle ſubject added a double portion of domeſtic ſtrength—and the *third* near the center of his dominions. It is not impoſſible, but the rude and uncultivated ſtate of theſe extenſive *waſtes*, might influence the founder of our empire in his choice, as well as their happy ſituation. But whatever was the motive of aſſigning theſe particular ſpots for his ſeveral *aſyla*—it is certain, that the ſucceſs of them was equal to his utmoſt wiſhes. The Prince of Roman Hiſtorians mentions this ſenſible inſtitution of Romulus, as being agreeable to the ancient practice of the *Founders of all States*, (x) But we cannot ſuppoſe, that a rough and unpoliſhed *Norman*, whoſe only ſcience could be that of war, and whoſe principal amuſements muſt ariſe

 from

(x) Deinde, ne vana urbis magnitudo eſſet, adjiciendæ multitudinis cauſâ, *vetere conſilio condentium urbes*, qui, obſcuram atque humilem conciendo ad ſe multitudinem, natam é terrâ ſibi prolem ementiebantur; locum, qui nunc ſeptus deſcendentibus inter duos lucos eſt, *aſylum* aperit. Eò ex finitimis populis turba omnis, ſine diſcrimine, liber an ſervus eſſet, avida novarum rerum perfugit: idque *primum* ad cæptam magnitudinem roboris fuit.

Liv. Hiſt. Rom. Lio. i. ſect 8.

from the very din and clangor of arms—could adopt this refinement of policy from any *literary* lights, or derive any intelligence about it from the informing page of hiſtory. Nature alone muſt have been his guide; and his tutoreſs, inſtructive reaſon.

Such was the ſtate of *Hugh Lupus*'s political inſtitution! But the hiſtory of very remote times becomes ſo exceedingly confuſed, when it depends only upon the evidence of oral tradition; that though the remembrance of the fact, relative to theſe *aſyla*, was perfectly diſtinct and clear, in the days of our hiſtorical collector, *Webb*; yet the *reaſons* of the fact were entirely obliterated and defaced from the traces of human memory. Speaking of Twemlowe, in his Vale-Royal, he proceeds thus, "And ſo we paſs into that ſpacious precinct "of *Rudheath*, a wide common, containing a "large circuit, and which hath in *old time had a* "*ſanctuary* in it, with privileges thereunto; ſuch, "as howſoever intended by thoſe founders, in pity "and *compaſſion to poor offenders*; yet in the abuſe "of them, an encouragement to wilful and deſ-"perate tranſgreſſors; and therefore juſtly demo-"liſhed."—But tho' *Webb*, depending only upon tradition, knew nothing of the *true origin* of this aſylum; yet that ancient, invaluable record, the *Cheſhire Doomeſday* (y) bears indiſputable evidence to the *principles* and *reaſons*, upon which this political eſtabliſhment was firſt formed. The verdict of two inquiſitions, delivered by a jury of the moſt diſtinguiſhed gentlemen of Cheſhire, upon the awful ſolemnity of an oath; contains the

(y) See pages 13, 14.

the faith and teſtimony of this indiſputable evidence. One of theſe inquiſitions was taken in the ſeventh year of Edward the Second; and the other in the twentieth of Edward the Third. —The following is the ſubſtance of the two verdicts:

By an inquiſition, taken before Hugh de Audelith, juſtice of Cheſter, on Saturday after the feaſt of St. Peter ad Vincula, it was found, "That a "certain large piece of *waſte*, called *Overmarſh*, "was in *ancient* times ordained for ſtrangers, of "what country ſoever; and aſſigned to ſuch, as "came to the *peace* of the Earl of Cheſter, or to "his aid; reſorting there to form dwellings, but "without building any fixed houſes, by the means "of nails or pins, ſave only booths and tents to "to live in."

The other inquiſition, is as follows: "The ju-"ry (z) declared upon their oaths, that the *moor* "which is called *Rudheath*, was formerly a *waſte* "place, very anciently aſſigned and ſet apart by "ſome of the *old Earls of Cheſter*, for the recep-"tion, not only of their own ſubjects, but of all "fugitive ſtrangers coming to the aid of the earl's "*peace*, either from *England*, or from any other "countries."—And there is an inquiſition of the ſame tenor, relative to the other aſylum of *Hoole-Heath*.

Having thus ſhewed you beyond the poſſibility

(z) "Hamo de Maſſi, Hugo de Venables, Urian de Sancto Pe-"tro, Rogerus de Chedle, Hugo de Dutton, Petres de Dutton, "et Robertus de Pulford, Milites; Johannes de Wettenhale, Wil-"lielmus de Boidell, Johannes de Leghe, Matthæus de Becheton, "David de Egerton, Robertus de Bulkeley, et alii *Juratoes*."
Cheſhire Domeſday, princip.

of a doubt, that the principles of policy, in founders of the *Roman* and the *Ceſtrian* ſtates, were as perfectly parallel, as they were perfectly refined, a circumſtance ſurely the moſt reſplendent for our native country; I ſhall take the liberty of troubling you with another illuſtrious fact; which is equally founded in truth, and equally conduſive to the glory of our palatine.—That renowned Earl, *Randal Blundeville*, reigned the ſole monarch of his dominions, with ſuch an abſolute and ſuch a ſovereign power, that he acknowledged no ſuperior; whenever the beheſts of his paramount lord were contrary to the maxims of ſound policy, or to thoſe dictates of natural juſtice, which he thought a wiſe and virtuous prince owed always to a faithful and an obedient people: Of this, there was a remarkable inſtance, when that weak Prince Henry the Third iſſued his imperial mandate for the collection of the *papal tax*, commonly called *Peter-pence*, through the whole extent of his dominions. Since our *ceſtrian monarch* not only forbid the collection of it, within the bounds of his own territories, but threatened the collectors with condign puniſhment, if they inſolently diſobeyed his royal pleaſure. Amongſt other hiſtorians, of the moſt approved character, who relate this fact; William Smith, in the Vale-Royal, gives us the following, and by far the beſt, account of the tranſaction.—"Randal, or Ranulph, the Third, he ſays, was very well learned, eſpecially in the laws of the "realm; inſomuch that he compiled a book thereof. He was alſo very zealous in religion. For "we read, that when the Pope ſent his collectors "throughout Chriſtendom, to gather up his *tenths*,

"he

" he *alone* refuſed to pay any: Suffering none in " his dominions, either layman or clerk, to yield " any *tenths* to the Pope's proctors; although *all* " *England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, paid* " *it.*" *(a)*

Inſtances, ſuch as theſe, of refined policy, wiſdom, and puiſſance in the conduct of our *local* monarchs; I fondly imagine, my dear friend, though " I have never dreamt upon the ſummit of Par- " naſſus"—to be ſtars, of ſuch hiſtoric radiance, in the annals of our *Cheſhire Empire*; that any ſketch of the memorials of her ancient glory muſt have eclipſed their effulgent ſplendour, by covering them with the veil of obſcurity.

But the very *cataſtrophe* of our glory, is in ſome meaſure the herald of our former fame. And as no language can expreſs the final period of this glory, in a clearer or more conciſe manner, than our great antiquary has related it, " So take the ſad tale of this " cataſtrophe in nearly the words of Camden. " *Randal Blundeville*, was ſucceeded by his ne- " phew, *John*, ſurnamed *Scotus*; who dying with- " out iſſue, Henry the third, charmed with the " *ſight of ſo fair an inheritance*, annexed it to the " crown; not being willing that ſuch a *vaſt eſtate* " ſhould be *parcelled* out amongſt *diſtaffs*; meaning " the *ſiſters and coheireſſes* of Earl *John*. But the " kings of England, when this county devolved " to

(a) Part 1ſt page 51.

In part 2d page 31 there is this remark: " It is not impertinent to ſet down, what the ſame author—Henry Bradſhaw—" written in another place; *and what collections out of him I* " *find recorded.*" But this remark is an undoubted argument, that the hiſtorian of the Vale-Royal, who was almoſt coeval with Bradſhaw, imagined his collections to be *unpubliſhed.*

" to the crown, maintained their *antient palatine* " *prerogatives*, and continued to hold their courts, " as the kings of France did in the county of " Champaign; that the honour of the *palatinate* " might not be extinguiſhed by diſuſe. An honour " which was ever afterwards conferred upon the " king's eldeſt ſon; and, in the firſt inſtance, up- " on *Edward*, heir apparent of this very Henry. " But when this martial prince had unhappily been " taken priſoner in the battle of Lewes, he was " obliged to regain his liberty, by plucking this " ineſtimable jewel out of his princely diadem, " and reſigning it to the victorious *Baron*, Simon " Montfort, Earl of Leiceſter; as the valuable " reward, and indeed the only adequate purchaſe, " of his ranſom. *(b)*

After theſe hiſtorical anecdotes, I ſhall treſpaſs no longer upon your friendſhip, than merely to explain the origin of the *minſtrel-juriſdiction*, which I only barely hinted at, under the ſuperb manſion, and family of Dutton.

Among the military atchievements of the renowned Earl Randal; his heroic enterpriſes againſt Llewellin, Prince of Wales, were not the leaſt inſtances of his undaunted proweſs. But being one day ſurpriſed, and ſurrounded in his caſtle of Rothlent in Flintſhire, by a force infinitely ſuperior to his

(b) Simon Montfort being ſoon afterwards ſlain in the battle of Eveſham, the palatinate reverted to the crown: and Richard the ſecond, by a ſolemn act of the whole legiſlature, erected it into a principality, as a ſplendid augmentation of his royal titles; ſtiling himſelf, *Princeps Ceſtriæ*. His ſucceſſor, Henry the Fourth, repealed this act, and reſtored thoſe *palatine prerogatives* which it enjoys to this day.

Camden's Brit. vol. i. page 682.

his own; he ſent expreſſes, with the utmoſt privacy, to his great general, Roger Lacy,(d) earneſtly deſiring his immediate relief in this exigence of danger. Theſe expreſſes found *Lacy* at Cheſter, during the anniverſary of the Midſummer *fair*. And, as the occaſion was critically urgent, from the imminent peril of the Earl's life; this General immediately marched with a tumultuous croud of *players*, *fiddlers*, and *muſicians*, and all the perſons he could poſſibly aſſemble; of whom great number had been tempted to Cheſter, by the celebration of this feſtal anniverſary. Llewellin, alarmed at the approach of this vaſt multitude, raiſed the ſiege with the utmoſt precipitation. And after Earl *Randall*'s return in triumph, the effuſions of his gratitude formed his firſt acts of ſovereignty; by rewarding *Lacy* with an *excluſive prerogative* over thoſe particular *trades and myſteries*, which had been exerciſed by theſe fortunate, and ſignal inſtruments of his royal preſervation. The *Conſtable*'s ſon, John Lacy, reſerved his *excluſive privilege* over ſome of thoſe mechanic *occupations*; but granted the *minſtrel-prerogative* to *Hugh Dutton* of *Dutton*, and his heirs: the ſon of that *Ralfe Dutton*, who is ſuppoſed to have particularly marched at the head of the band of *minſtrels*. Thus conſigning the rule and juriſdiction over this *muſical profeſſion* to that family, whoſe anceſtor had ſo valiantly

(d) Roger Lacy was *conſtable* of Cheſter. The duty of this high officer, was to command the vanguard of the Earl's army; and to be the foremoſt in every poſt of danger.

liantly commanded them, in the capacity of a body of victorious ſoldiers. *(e)*

THE GENERAL BOUNDARIES OF CHESHIRE;

IN THE DESCRIPTIVE POESY OF MICHAEL DRAYTON.

" Oh! thou thrice-happy ſhire, confined ſo to be
" 'Twixt two, ſuch famous floods, as *Merſey* is, and *Dee.*
" Thy *Dee*, upon the *weſt*, from *Wales* doth thee divide;
" Thy *Merſey*, on the *North*, from the *Lancaſtrian* ſide,
" And tow'rds the *Derbyan Peak* and *Morelands*, which do draw
" More mountainous and wild, the high crown'd *Shutlings-Law*
" And *Molecop* are thy mounds; with thoſe proud hills, whence
" rove
" The lovely ſiſter Brooks, the ſilv'ry *Dane* and *Dove.*
" Clear *Dove*, that makes to *Trent*; the other to the *Weſt:*
" But, in that famous town moſt happy, of the reſt,
" From which thou tak'ſt thy name; fair *Cheſter! (k)* called of
" old
" *Caer-Legion*, whilſt proud *Rome* her conqueſts here did hold.
" Of thoſe, her *Legions* known, the faithful ſtation then;
" So ſtoutly held to *tack*, by the near *North-Wales* men.
" Yet, by her own *right name*, ſhe'd rather called be,
" As her the Britons term'd, the *fortreſs upon Dee*;
" Or, vainly ſhe may ſeem a *miracle* to ſtand,
" Th' imaginary work of ſome *huge Giant's* hand.

Poly-Olb. ſong XI. line 43, et ſeq.

(e) When the Earl's *triumphal cavalcade* made their public entry into Cheſter, after the diſperſion of Llewellin and his Britons; it is not improbable, that, like the return of Saul after the ſlaughter of the Philiſtines, his victorious " *minſtrels* played " before him, with tabrets, and with joy, and with all their " inſtruments of muſic." But whether they did or no, thus much is indiſputably certain; that the muſicians always *played* upon their inſtruments of minſtrelſy, before the Earl of Cheſter's *repreſentative*, the Lord of *Dutton*, in the proceſſion to St. John's Church, at the Midſummer anniverſary.

The magnitude and importance of this county will not be diſputed, when the reader is told, that its circumference is more than 200 miles. To give an idea of its form, Speed has not unaptly compared it to the right wing of an eagle, ſtretched forth from the furtheſt point of Wirral hundred, and touching, with her firſt feather, upon the confines of Yorkſhire. In the unhappy days of *civil* contention, when England felt all the horrors of inteſtine feuds, and domeſtic warfare (in the garb of religion) ſtalked over the face of the kingdom, this county was not without its ſhare of the general calamity;—Cheſter (the metropolis of the county) Nantwich, and ſome few other places, particularly taſted the very dregs of the bitter cup of bigotry. In thoſe days of unenlightened ſuperſtition, when the furious hand of fanaticiſm demoliſhed even ſhrines, monuments, and churches, there can be little wonder that leſs ſacred edifices were deſtroyed; hence ſeven out of eight caſtles in this county, were nearly razed to their foundations; the veſtiges of a few walls only remaining, as mementos of the dreadful effects of civil commotions and religious rage! The names of theſe caſtles were, Beeſton, Haulton, Frodſham, Shotwick, Dunham, Old-caſtle, and Stourton; Cheſter caſtle yet remains, but in ſo periſhing and inſecure a ſtate, that workmen are now employed in the erection of a new gaol, on the ſame ſite; the plan of which is ſuch as to comprehend alike the health and ſecurity of all thoſe whom misfortune, imprudence, or vice, may throw within its walls.—As if the *ſouls* of the good people of Cheſhire called for exactly the ſame protection as their *bodies*, the county

contained an equal number of religious houſes; namely, Stanlow, Helbree, Norton, Macclesfield, Bunbury, Combermere, Rudheath, and Vale-Royal; all of which, being conſidered by our eighth Harry as a ſort of *clerical cobwebs*, nurſing only *ſpiritual ſpiders*, were *bruſhed* away by his *hand* of *Reformation!*

Travellers who have viſited this county at thoſe ſeaſons of the year when the bounties of Providence are moſt conſpicuous, will candidly confeſs, that it is excelled by none, and equalled by few, for fertility of ſoil, and high ſtate of cultivation; a compliment juſtly due to the induſtry and ability of the farmers and poſſeſſors of the land. Nor is it leſs remarkable for ſalubrity of air, evinced by the frequent inſtances of longevity in its inhabitants; ſcarce a village, the reſidents of which exceed not one hundred people, but ten or twelve of them have at leaſt from ſeventy to eighty winters each on their backs! and though their *heads* repreſent beautiful balls of *ſnow*, they carry their *load* of *years* with aſtoniſhing eaſe, many of their *backs* remaining firm and *unbent!* If the reader doubts this, let him viſit only the delightfully-ſituated village of Haulton, near Frodſham, and the venerable appearance of every fourth or fifth man he meets, will put him in mind of his *grandfather!*

In ſaying this it is not our wiſh to have it underſtood, that the *men of Cheſhire* are ſingular for *temperance*; the number of public-houſes, in the city and county, affords an abundant proof that they are not *water-drinkers*: Market-towns, villages, and high-roads, are *graced* with *herds* of *Red-*

lions,

lions, *White-lions*, *Black-lions*, *White-bears*, and *black* ones, not to mention the *flocks* of *Angels* and *Spread-eagles*, with a whole *firmament* of *Stars* and *Riſing-ſuns*, darting their *rays* of invitation upon the paſſing traveller.—Sociality is not, however, confined to public manſions: Poor is that farmer indeed whoſe private cot is not furniſhed with a little of the quinteſſence of the barley; and as his cellar-door, like his heart, is generally open, you cannot confer a higher favour than by *drinking a jug* and *ſmoking a pipe* with him! a favour which is often increaſed by the greater quantity of *jugs* you conſume! Indeed, this is his *ſummum bonum*—a friend at his fire-ſide, the ſubject--corn, cheeſe, or *politics* (in the latter of which he has ſometimes been known to *out-talk* even the *ſchool-maſter* or the *exciſeman*) his happineſs is complete, and he ſeems to wiſh for no other heaven!

The *tree* of *hoſpitality* is ſeldom out of *bloſſom* in Cheſhire; but, at thoſe ſeaſons commonly called *Wakes*, it is in *full bearing*. This is a ſort of *carnival*, when nothing but eating, drinking, and good-fellowſhip, abound; it is then the lads and laſſes aſſemble, in their holiday finery, and, with *hearts* lighter than their *heels*, dance away the *cares* of the year. The luxuriancy of a *wake's table* is not eaſily deſcribed: Sirloins, rumps, legs, and, in ſhort, ſolids of every deſcription, and of the beſt kinds, with a profuſion of puddings, pies, tarts, cuſtards, *&c. ad infinitum*, of the richeſt qualities, preſent themſelves at one view, and, during the whole day, are expoſed to the attacks of every comer! As this is the practice of all houſes, of

the leaſt reſpectability, a man muſt have a *commodious craw* indeed to do any *ſubſtantial* juſtice to the bounty of his friends—rendered the more agreeable by the ungarniſhed ſimplicity, plainneſs, and freedom, with which it is offered. In a word, *Hoſpitality* may be ſaid to be *caterer*—*Hearty-welcome*, *cook*—and *Sincerity*, *preſident* of the board. *Ceremony* is not even *ſecond-couſin* to the family!

To ſay more of theſe '*Chief of men*,' would trench too much upon the limits of this little work; ſuffice it, that their *hearts* may be compared to their *ale*, *pure* and *home-brewed*; and, for the *women*, their *perſons* and *diſpoſitions* are in general like their *cheeſe*—*univerſally admired*.

A SHORT

A SHORT

HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

OF

CHESTER, &c.

ACCORDING to Sir THOMAS ELLIOTT, the original name given to this city, was Neomagus, ſo called from Magus, ſon of Samothes, ſon of Japhet, its founder, 240 years after the Flood. An aſſertion which, if fully authenticated, places it on a line of antiquity with any other city in the univerſe. Its ſecond name Caerlleon (ſee Albius Marecticus) ſo called from Leon Vawr, or Gawr; who, as ſome writers ſay, was a giant in Albion, and one of its reſtorers: This conjecture it is probable may in ſome meaſure have originated from the circumſtance of a human ſkeleton, of prodigious ſize, (ſome ſay 9 feet in length) being dug up in Pepper-ſtreet. Upon the ſettlement of the Britons here it was next called Caerleil, and afterwards Caerleir, becauſe theſe two Britiſh Kings were enlargers and beautifiers of it, according to Stone and others.—Previous to the arrival of the Romans here, it is probable this city was called Genuina or Gunia, as appeared from an inſcription, on a votive altar, dug up here, and dedicated to Jupiter Taran, i. e. in the Britiſh language the Thunderer; which language it is likely the Romans might make uſe of in this inſcription

to convey to poſterity an idea of their conqueſts over the Britons. After the Romans had fixed here their conquering legion, Valens and Victrix, it was then ſtiled Caerlheon, Caerlegion, or as it is otherwiſe called, Ardourdwy, and Caer, by way of excellence, as Cambden obſerves, to diſtinguiſh it from the other Caerleon, or Caeruſk, in South Wales. The Latin hiſtorians ſtile it Ceſtria, that is, a Caſtris, which the Romans had fixed there; and Leinceſtria, that is the city of the legions.—It has alſo been called (as appears from Roman tiles dug up) Deunana, Deva, and Devana Civitas; which it is preſumed have taken their riſe from its proximity to the Dee. In later ages it was ſtiled Legan Cheſter, and Lege Cheſter; but in theſe days Weſt Cheſter, or Cheſter. By Ptolemy it is ſometimes called Oxcellum, Uxcellum, Plegimundham, and Leogria, or Locrinus land; of which the three firſt denote no more (as Hollingſhead obſerves in the firſt volume of his Chronicles of England) than a rock, or place of ſtrong defence; and which, hiſtorians obſerve, was the boundary of King Locrinus's kingdom Weſtward: This was the chief city of the Ordovices before the coming in of the Romans, as moſt of our ancient hiſtorians affirm; which people were the inhabitants of North Wales.

The antiquity of this city is ſtill the more conſpicuous, from the ſtately remains of its ruins, which Dr. Leigh, in his Natural Hiſtory of Cheſhire, ſays, were diſcovered at the commencement of the preſent century: theſe, he deſcribes, as ſubterraneous vaults in cellars, through free-ſtone rock; the entrances into which were ranged into

ſeveral

ſeveral angles, and, from the deſcription of the curious catacombs in Italy, we may reaſonably conclude, theſe were made for the ſame purpoſe. They ſufficiently demonſtrate the greatneſs of the Roman power at Cheſter, ſignifying, that they were reſolved not only to keep incorporated while living, but alſo to preſerve their very aſhes together. In theſe paſſages have been found ſeveral Roman coins, which more fully prove theſe vaults to have been the habitations of Heathens, as has been obſerved in various other monaſteries.

This ancient and pleaſant city ſtands upon the borders of the river Dee, on the Weſt ſide of the county, diſtant about 20 miles ſouth-eaſt from the main ſea; about 20 miles eaſt from Denbigh; 40 north from Shrewſbury; 46 north-weſt from Stafford; 76 north weſt from Derby; and 75 ſouth from Lancaſter. Its lat. 53 deg. 15 min. north; and long. 3 deg. 2 min. weſt from London; its diſtance from the latter city being 182 miles.

There are few cities in Europe, or perhaps in the univerſe, which have a ſtronger claim to general attention, than Cheſter: the eye of the ſtranger will here find an ample field for admiration, the man of taſte, who may honor it with a viſit, will not depart ungratified, nor will the antiquarian ſearch in vain for ſome rich and profitable treaſures of inveſtigation within its walls.

The inhabitants of Cheſter may be ſaid to enjoy advantages which no other place, of equal magnitude, can boaſt of: peculiarly favoured by providence, the ſituation is as pleaſing, as the air is ſalubrious: As a proof of the latter the yearly bills of mortality furniſh us with numberleſs inſtances

of longevity. This, however, will be better elucidated by the inſertion of the following comparative ſtatement of the number of inhabitants that die annually in the undernamed places:

Vienna,	one in	19½
London,	——	20¾
Edinburgh,	——	20⅘
Leeds,	——	21⅗
Dublin,	——	22
Rome,	——	23
Amſterdam,	——	24
Breſlaw,	——	25
Berlin,	——	26½
Shrewſbury,	——	26½
Northampton,	——	26½
Liverpool,	——	27½
Mancheſter,	——	28
Cheſter,	——	40

The preſent degree of population of Cheſter, is ſaid to be about 15,000 ſouls, and (although not fortunate enough to be the ſeat of any particular or ſtaple manufacture) is yet increaſing: A ſtranger, on his firſt entrance into the city, might ſuppoſe that it is but thinly inhabited, the enveloped ſituation of the ſhops, which are moſtly covered by rows, tending to hide a conſiderable portion of people from the eye. Its foundation is chiefly on a dry ſandy ſtone rock; a circumſtance which may alſo contribute to its ſalubrity, and the longevity of its inhabitants. Mr. Pennant, whoſe reſpectability as a touriſt, and eminence as an author, are of the firſt rank, very conciſely deſcribes it in the following words:

'The

'The city is of a ſquare form, which evinces 'the origin to have been Roman, being in the fi- 'gure of their camps, with four gates facing the 'four points, four principal ſtreets, and a variety 'of leſſer, croſſing the others at right angles, di- 'viding the whole into leſſer ſquares. The walls 'are built on a ſoft freeſtone rock, high above the 'circumjacent country;' and are ſaid to have been built by the Mercian Lady Ethelfleda.

'The ſtructure of the four principal ſtreets is 'without parallel; they run direct from Eaſt to 'Weſt, and North to South, and were excavated 'out of the earth, and ſunk many feet beneath the 'ſurface. The carriages are driven far below the 'level of the kitchens, on a line with ranges of 'ſhops, over which paſſengers walk in galleries, 'which the inhabitants call the Rows, ſecure from 'wet or heat. In the Rows are likewiſe ranges of 'ſhops,' and ſteps to deſcend into the ſtreet.

That it was a place of conſiderable importance in the time of the Romans, no one can deny; as from them, it is confeſſed, originated an art which has for ages diſtinguiſhed the county of Cheſter above all others, that of *making cheeſe*.

Such is the antiquity of Cheſter, that the ſtranger who can paſs through without beſtowing on it ſome little ſhare of attention, muſt have an incu- rious eye indeed:—The exploring hand of time has, at different periods, preſented to the antiqua- rian ſome valuable treaſures:—Among theſe, is a Roman altar, now in the poſſeſſion of Mr. Dyſon, erected by Flavius Longus, tribune of the victori- ous 20th legion, and his ſon Longinus, in honour of the Emperors Diocleſian and Maximinian:—

Another

Another, discovered in 1653 (now at Oxford) inscribed to Jupiter:—Also a statue of Mithras, in the possession of the late Rev. Mr. Prescott, was discovered here; and a beautiful altar, with other Roman antiquities, were found in the Yacht field, in 1779:—The coins of Vespasian, Constantius, Trajan, Hadrian, &c. have at different times been found:—and there is little doubt but Chester is still rich in records of antiquity, which the researches of posterity may possibly discover.

In the 24th year of the present century, the remains of the illustrious Hugh Lupus (first Earl of Chester) were discovered in the chapter-house of the cathedral, incased with stone; where the body had lain, in undisturbed security, upwards of 600 years;—it was wrapped in leather, under which was the remnant of a shroud; at the head of the coffin was a stone, in the form of a Roman T, with the head of a wolf, in allusion to his name, cut thereon.—His sword of dignity is now in the Museum; and if we may measure the prowess of the Earl by the length of his sword, he must have been invincible indeed, the blade being little less than four feet long, and so very ponderous as to require more than a moderate share of strength even to brandish it!

Such is the weakness of ambition, and the littleness of human vanity, that (it is said) Alexander ordered coats of mail, eight feet high, to be interred, in hopes that posterity might find them, and thereby be impressed with wonder at the greatness of this hero, in supposing that he had commanded an army of giants:—We shall not, however, ascribe the same heroic intentions to our first Earl, but shall leave

leave the diſcernment of the reader to *draw the inference*, when he viſits the Muſeum and *draws the ſword*.

A part of this great man's ſhroud is now in the poſſeſſion of the Rev. Mr. Maſſey, of St. John's church-yard, Cheſter. It has a reſemblance to muſlin; but what it is, or of what materials it is made, no perſon can diſcover.

This great perſonage's court was princely;—his parliament conſiſted of eight barons, who attended his perſon: every baron had four eſquires, every eſquire one gentleman, and every gentleman one valet.—Such were the links in his chain of dignity.—In the hands of the barons was repoſed the power of life and death.

As a proof of the barbariſm of thoſe times, it is only neceſſary to mention, that, as the Saxon navy often viſited this port, one article of their exports was ſlaves, furniſhed, it is ſuppoſed, by the captives which were made in the frequent wars with the Welſh;—and for the bodies of the unfortunate Britons, thus tranſported, wine was the common exchange, which proved a valuable beverage, and highly grateful to the taſte of the Reverend Fathers of thoſe days; one of whom (Lucian the monk) ſpeaks in the *brighteſt* terms, with a kind of religious veneration, and enthuſiaſtic rapture, of its divine flavour and exquiſite richneſs.

Hugh Lupus was ſucceeded by his ſon Richard, who, after governing 19 years, met a watery grave in his paſſage from Normandy:—Richard's ſucceſſor was Ranulph, his couſin, who died at Cheſter in 1129, and was ſucceeded by the heroic Ranulph

nulph II. who, after a government of 25 years, fell a ſacrifice to poiſon in 1153.—His remains were interred at Cheſter; and Hugh his ſon took the reins of government after him, which he held 28 years.—After him the Earldom was poſſeſſed by his ſon Ranulph, whoſe benevolence acquired him the title of Ranulph the Good:—That cloud of ſuperſtition which darkened the horizon of thoſe times, overſhadowed the native goodneſs of this Earl's heart, and he entered the field with all that fury and fervour which fanaticiſm alone can inſpire. Hence the holy wars proclaimed alike his proweſs and his folly.—Beeſton caſtle was erected by this Earl.

The hiſtory of this Earl's government, we are told, contains an incident not leſs ſingular than ludicrous:—Ranulph ſought a retreat, from the attacks of the Welſh, in the caſtle of Rhuddlan; which underwent a violent ſiege for ſome time;—Till Roger Lacy, conſtable of Cheſter, collected a formidable band of fiddlers, and other motley minſtrels, who had aſſembled together at a fair at Cheſter, founded by Hugh Lupus, one leading privilege of which was, the protection of whores, rogues, thieves, and vagabonds, of every denomination, during its continuance, from reſtraint or puniſhment.—With this *regiment* of *roſiners* did Roger march into Wales, where, ſtrange to tell, they played ſo *good* a *tune*, that it in a ſhort time *cloſed* with the *raiſing* of the ſiege;—for which ſervice, Ranulph rewarded Lacy with full power over all the *ſcrapers* of *catgut* in the county;—a privilege which his ſon transferred to the family of the Duttons, in Cheſhire; and it is within the recollection of many perſons

perſons now living, that the anniverſary of this whimſical ſolemnity was regularly celebrated, on the feſtival of St. John the Baptiſt, by a proceſſion of the minſtrels to the church of their tutelar ſaint in Cheſter:—to the no ſmall amuſement of the ſpectators.

At the demiſe of this Earl, which happened in 1232, John, ſurnamed Scott, mounted the chair of ſtate:—He took to wife Helen, daughter of Llewelyn ap Jorwerth, Prince of North Wales, from which alliance no iſſue ariſing, at his death (which is ſaid to have been prematurely effected by poiſon) an extinction happened in the line of ſucceſſion, and Henry the Third annexed the Earldom to the crown in 1237. From his hands it was transferred, by gift, to his ſon Edward, afterwards King Edw. I. The chance of war next gave it to Simon de Montford, who took both Henry and his ſon priſoners, at the battle of Lewes, 1264; their liberation was purchaſed by the reſignation of the Earldom to Montford, whoſe brow was adorned with this laurel of conqueſt but a very ſhort period, as he reſigned the honour with his life, at the battle of Eveſham, not twelve months after. It next devolved to Edward of Carnarvon, ſon of Edward I. who enjoyed it 19 years; when his ſon, Edward of Windſor, ſucceeded. A period of 11 years had barely elapſed, when Edward the Black Prince took the reins. From him it devolved to his ſon, Richard of Bourdeaux, who, in the 21ſt year of his reign, erected Cheſhire into a principality; an honour which was cancelled in the firſt year of Henry IV.

His

His ſon, afterwards the great Henry V. (who was the ſcourge of France) next ſucceeded; and after him Henry VI. whoſe life was cruelly violated and taken, after the battle of Tewkſbury.

In 1471, Edward V. (eldeſt ſon of Edward IV.) was created Earl of Cheſter; but who, with his brother Richard (Duke of York) fell by that ambitious monſter, Richard III. The only offspring of this tyrant's loins, Edward, was next created Earl in 1483; the ſubſequent year, however, putting a period to his life, Arthur (ſon of King Henry VII.) was next created; who was ſucceeded by his brother Henry, in 1504.

A long period was ſuffered to elapſe ere the next Earldom took place, which was in the perſon of Henry Frederick Stuart, ſon of James I. in 1610;—He dying without iſſue, Charles, his brother, ſucceeded, in 1616, afterwards Charles I. who, fourteen years after, transferred the Earldom to his ſon Charles, afterwards Charles II.

A period of more than eighty years elapſed ere the next Earldom was created, which was not till the preſent illuſtrious Houſe of Hanover aſcended the throne of the kingdom; when, in 1714, George, ſon of George I. ſucceeded; and, after him, in 1728, Frederick, our firſt George's eldeſt ſon; in his hands it remained till 1750, when his preſent Majeſty ſucceeded to it; and, in 1762, it was transferred to George Auguſtus Frederick, his eldeſt ſon, the preſent Earl, *with whom may it long continue!*

After this account of the Earls, we ſhall revert to the hiſtory of this antient city; which has, at different

different periods, been the ſeat of many remarkable events.

Here it was the Caledonian King, Malcolm IV. (in 1159) ceded to our ſecond Henry all the lands that the fortunes of war had wreſted from the crown of England.

In 1255 Cheſter experienced all the horrors of warfare: Llewelyn ap Gryffydd, Prince of Wales, invaded it with an arm of deſolation, carrying fire and ſword up to its very gates: and, ſuch is the revolution of things, this city was ſelected by Edward I. as the place for Llewelyn to do him homage; that Prince, however, conſiſtent with the native ambition of his mind, ſpurned at the commands; but the refuſal ended with his own ruin, and the loſs of his principality; for in 1300, Edward of Carnarvon received here the final acknowledgment of the Welſh to the ſovereignty of the Engliſh crown.

Cheſter was the favourite city of Richard II. who honoured it with his preſence in 1397; and two years after he was lodged a cloſe priſoner in the caſtle, which had been ſeized into the hands of our fourth Henry, who cancelled the lives of ſeveral of Richard's adherents and favourites.

Cheſter has, at ſeveral periods, been honoured with the preſence of royalty;—in 1459 Henry VI. with Queen Margaret, and her ſon Edward, paid a viſit here; and, as a ſmall, but grateful tribute of reſpect to thoſe gentlemen of the county who were attached to her cauſe, ſhe preſented them with ſmall ſilver ſwans.

In 1493, Henry VII. and his conſort, graced the city with their preſence. In 1617, Edward Button,

Button, Eſq. mayor, had the honour of preſenting James I. with a cup, beautifully gilt, and in it one hundred Jacobins of gold, as a rich mark of the city's attachment to his crown and perſon.

No very memorable incident occurred, from this period till the reign of Charles I. when, in conſequence of the loyalty of the inhabitants to that Monarch, Cheſter was beſieged by the parliament forces; and ſuch were the diſtreſſes of the unfortunate citizens, that they were driven to the ſad alternative of eating the fleſh of horſes, dogs, and cats: nor did they ſurrender, notwithſtanding this ſhocking neceſſity, till they had procured terms from their beſiegers that did honour to the ſpirit and valour of the citizens. This ſurrender happended on the third of February, 1645-6. Forty-five years after (1690) King William viſited Cheſter; and during the reign of this Monarch, it was remarkable for having a coinage of ſilver currency; at which time Cheſter was ſelected as one of the ſix cities in the kingdom for the reſidence of an aſſay-maſter.

As a ſtriking contraſt to the municipal government of the preſent day, for ſeveral centuries previous to 1542, public ſtews and brothels were licenſed by the police; and, what was not a little whimſical, the *impurity* of the *inſide* of the houſe was diſtinguiſhed by the *purity* of the *out*; as they were made conſpicuous to the eye of the ſtranger by their being white-waſhed; thus at leaſt ſhewing the *outward and viſible ſign*, though not of the *inward and ſpiritual grace*.

MUSEUM S.S.B. BRITANNICUM

CITY

CITY WALLS.

The ſtranger who has never had the felicity of viewing the city walls, can entertain but a very faint idea of the convenience and pleaſure which they afford: Their circumference is one mile, three quarters, and a hundred and one yards: To the excellent ſtate of preſervation in which they are kept, we are indebted to the trading opulence, and mercantile ſpirit, of the gentlemen in the linen branch belonging to our ſiſter kingdom; a kind of murage duty of two-pence on every hundred yards of linen imported, being paid for the purpoſe.

This valuable walk had its origin, no doubt, in *warfare*; being evidently intended as fortifications in days leſs tranquil than the preſent. That potent warrior, *Time*, has, however, razed its towers, inſomuch that only one remains, to perpetuate the hoſtile æra in which it was erected. This is known by the name of The Phœnix-tower, a ſituation remarkable for being the place where King Charles the Firſt retired to ſee the battle of Rowton-moor, where his army, under Sir Marmaduke Langdale, was defeated by General Pointz.

Thus this beautiful walk, the offſpring of *war*, is now ſolely devoted to the purpoſes of *pleaſure*, and ſalubrious enjoyment; and thus is *evil* ſometimes the parent of *good*.

The views which the walls command are various and extenſive, enriched with enlivening ſcenes, variegated landſcapes and delightful proſpects.—In ſhort, no walk can be better calculated either for health or pleaſure, than—the walls of Cheſter.

Three very handſome and ſpacious arches, at

 the

the Eaſt, Weſt, and South entrances, have been all finiſhed within theſe few years (the two latter very recently) and nothing remains but the erection of a ſimilar arch at the North, to complete an uniformity much wanted.

At the North-gate ſtands the city gaol, where the bodies of unfortunate debtors, and more unfortunate criminals, are ſecured. If the *ſituation* of a priſon can, however, alleviate the rigours of confinement, it is here where ſuch alleviation is to be met with; the proſpect which it commands, and the purity of the air which the unhappy priſoners breathe, rendering it enviable when compared with many other places of the kind in the kingdom; an obſervation which has been made by that great philanthropiſt, the late Mr. Howard.

BOUNDARIES.

Edward the Black Prince was the perſonage who preſcribed the boundaries of the city; which extend, weſtward, from a ſpot called Iron-bridge, (on the Eaton road) acroſs the Wrexham turnpike-road, down to the Leach; then croſſing Saltney marſh, near the ſecond mile-ſtone, and the river, lead up to Blacon-point; and along the courſe of the old river, turning up to Stone-bridge; and along the brook-ſide, croſs the Parkgate road, and lead up to Beach-pool; and by the ſide of the brook, lead to Flookerſbrook; then croſſing the canal, and the two turnpike-roads to London, lead down to the river-ſide, oppoſite to Iron-bridge; making, in the whole, about eight miles.

The limits of the port of Cheſter are the end of

of Wirral; to which place the official duty of the city coronor extends.

CORPORATION.

The exiſtence of a corporation in Cheſter is very antient: According to King's Vale Royal, the firſt mayor was Sir Walter Lynnet, Knight, in 1242, who enjoyed the office ſeveral years; his ſucceſſor was Richard Clark, Eſq. who continued in the chair eight years; the third was John Aneway, who enjoyed it five years; a period of time, altogether, which nearly comprehended the reign of Henry III. Since which time the city has continued to be governed by a mayor, recorder, two ſheriffs, twenty-four aldermen, and forty common-council-men. To which are annexed a ſword-bearer, a mace-bearer, a yeoman, crier, four ſerjeants at mace, and a porter.

Among other reſpectable and illuſtrious perſonages who have dignified the pretorian chair, we find the names of Sir John Savage (anceſtor to the Earls Rivers) who ſignalized himſelf at the memorable battle of Boſworth; Sir Thomas Smith, Earl of Derby, Earl of Warrington, Sir Thomas Groſvenor, Colonel Robert Whitley, Sir Richard Groſvenor, Sir Robert Groſvenor, Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, the preſent Earl Groſvenor, Thomas Groſvenor, Eſq. Thomas Cholmondeley, Eſq. Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, Bart. John Legh, of Adlington, Eſq. and Sir Robt. H. Vaughan, Bart.

The firſt recorder is ſaid to have been elected by the charter of Henry VII. dated the 21ſt of April, 1505, when Ralph Birkenhead, Eſq. was choſen. This office was, till lately, filled by the late R. Townſ-

hend, Eſq. who enjoyed it more than thirty years. On his reſignation, the late Thomas Cowper, of Overlegh, Eſq. was choſen; a gentleman who poſſeſſed a brilliancy of genius, and an acuteneſs of underſtanding, which would have been an ornament to the firſt departments in the profeſſion;—ſo valuable an acquiſition the city enjoyed but a very few months, when it pleaſed Providence to remove him (we hope) to a better place. If the choice of a ſucceſſor did ever tend, in any degree, to ſoften the poignancy of a public loſs, it has in this inſtance; the preſent recorder being Foſter Bower, Eſq. a gentleman eminently diſtinguiſhed for his ability as a counſellor, and his integrity as a man.

REPRESENTATIVES.

The year 1543 (in the reign of Henry VIII.) is recorded as the origin of repreſentation for this city and county; when a ſummons was received to ſend two knights for the county, and two citizens for the city, to parliament. The preſent repreſentatives for the county, are John Crewe, of Crewe, Eſq. and Sir Robert Saluſbury Cotton, of Combermere-abbey, Bart.—For the city, Thomas Groſvenor, and the Right Hon. Lord Belgrave.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF CHESTER.

In the centre of the city, near the junction of the four principal ſtreets, is the Croſs, where St. Peter's church ſtands, ſuppoſed on the ſite of the Roman Prætorium: and nearly oppoſite is the Conduit, erected in 1582; from which, on particular feſtive occaſions (till within theſe few years) uſed

uſed to iſſue a certain portion of the *juice of the grape*, properly qualified, into the gaping mouths of ſuch as had the *taſte* to attend, and were *fortunate* enough to receive it. Adjoining to this is that ignominious elevation ſtiled the Pillory; but, in compliment to the city, we mention, that no perſon has been *ambitious* enough to *aſpire* to ſo *eminent* an *honour*, for nearly twenty years paſt; and not more than three or four ſince the commencement of the preſent century. Adjoining St. Peter's church, is the Pentice, the ſeat of magiſtracy; and where the town-office is kept.

The Croſs is famous for being the annual ſcene of exhibition of that *polite play*, called a bull-bait; where four or five of theſe *horned heroes* are attended by ſeveral hundred lovers of that *rational amuſement*. Till within a few years, the *dramatis perſonæ* of this *elegant ſcene* included even magiſtracy itſelf, the mayor and corporation attending, in their official habiliments, at the Pentice windows, not only to countenance the *diverſions* of the *ring*, but to participate in a ſight of its *enjoyments*. A proclamation was alſo made, by the crier of the court, with all the gravity and ſolemnity of an oration before a *Romiſh ſacrifice*; the elegant compoſition of which run thus, "*Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! If any man ſtands within twenty yards of the bull-ring, let him take—what comes.*" After which followed the uſual public ejaculation, for "the ſafety of the king and the mayor of the city;" when the *beauties* of the ſcene commenced, and the dogs immediately *fell to*. Here a prayer for his worſhip was not unſeaſonable, as even the ermin'd cloak was no ſecurity againſt the carcaſes of dead ani-

mals, with which ſpectators, without diſtinction, were occaſionally ſaluted.

We ſhall not attempt a deſcription of the *tender* offices practiſed, at ſuch times, on ſo noble a creature;—one, however, we cannot omit mentioning;—in 1787, an unfortunate animal, ſmarting under his wounds and fatigue, was very *naturally* induced to *lie down*;—the *argument* made uſe of, in this ſituation, however, *as naturally* induced him to *get up*;—his *humane* followers hitting upon the ingenious expedient of ſetting fire to ſome ſtraw under his body; when, it is hardly neceſſary to add, "the wretched animal heav'd forth ſuch groans, as ſtretch'd his leathern coat almoſt to burſting." This circumſtance of the *fire* was, however, no bad *ſatire* (emblematically conſidered) on the tranſactions of the day—the whole being little better than a—"*burning ſhame.*"

The late Dr. Cowper is ſaid to have had the merit, when mayor, of putting a ſtop to the attendance of the corporate body on theſe days; and Mr. Alderman Brodhurſt, in his mayoralty, made a laudable, but ineffectual, effort to ſuppreſs a relick of barbariſm, 'more honoured in the *breach* than the *obſervance.*'

The four principal ſtreets are, Eaſtgate-ſtreet, Watergate-ſtreet, Bridge-ſtreet, and Northgate-ſtreet; the firſt of which is large and ſpacious; the ſecond rather narrow and contracted; the third, wide and airy; and the latter in ſome parts equally ſo. Such is the venerable appearance of many ranges of dwellings, that they may be ſaid to preſent to the eye, as it were, a model of every thing antique in the univerſe. Where, in ſome places,

new

new-built houſes are intermixed with old ones, the appearance is motley and groteſque: to ſee a modern manſion, juſt finiſhed, ſtanding between two gothic ſtructures, the youngeſt probably not leſs than 200 years old, gives the beholder an idea (if the alluſion may be allowed) of the picture of a *fine gentleman of the preſent day*, placed between the portraitures of a *brace of beaux* of the days of *Queen Beſs*.

Paſſing through the Eaſtgate, you enter Foregate-ſtreet, which is about 572 yards in length, and, in general, 18 in breadth. From this ſtreet iſſue Cow-lane and Queen-ſtreet on the left, and John's-ſtreet and Love-lane on the right. Queen-ſtreet has been built within theſe few years; its ſituation is pleaſant and airy; in it is a large, well-built chapel, the place of worſhip of a ſect of Independents; alſo a reputable academy, for the education of youth, kept by Mrs. Sellers.

Love-lane is celebrated for a manufacture, the *fame* of which has been *puff'd* in almoſt every city and town throughout England and Ireland—the making of *tobacco pipes*; and, if the convivial diſpoſition of the *Ceſtrians* is to be judged of by the conſumption of that article among us, a ſtranger would pronounce us the moſt ſocial ſet of people upon the earth.

A little below Love-lane, not many years paſt, ſtood a ſtrong poſtern gate, call'd the Bars, dividing Foregate-ſtreet from Boughton; not far from which ſtands the Octagon, a chapel where a numerous and reſpectable body of Methodiſts regularly aſſemble.

Boughton is a large and wide ſtreet, on the London road; at the right-hand ſide of which ſtands (as a ſort of *memento mori* to the paſſing traveller) the fatal tree where many an unfortunate fellow-creature has forfeited his life to the violated laws of his country. A little beyond are Barrel-well, and the Cherry-gardens; the former containing an excellent cold bath, and the latter affording a delightfully *rural promenade* during the ſummer ſeaſon.

At the oppoſite point of the city to the above, is Watergate-ſtreet; which leads into Goſs lane, Crook's-lane, Trinity-lane, Weaver's-lane, Lower-lane, and Nicholas-ſtreet. Crook's-lane contains a Preſbyterian chapel, erected in the time of the late Rev. Matthew Henry, of pious memory, early in the preſent century. The duties of this chapel are now performed by the Rev. Mr. Chidlaw.—Nearly oppoſite to Nicholas-ſtreet, is his Majeſty's Cuſtom-houſe; and a little lower down is the New Linen-hall, erected by the Iriſh merchants, in 1778, containing 111 ſhops, incloſing a pleaſant and ſpacious area. Near this place, on the oppoſite ſide of the way, was a religious houſe of *Grey Friars*, the date of which is in the reign of Henry VIII. The *ſpirit* of *reformation*, however, went ſo far as to *convert* this habitation of *ſanctity* into a wine vault; where, inſtead of the *pure* and *ſacred* order of the *Greys*, it became (a few years ago) the receptacle of a more *pure aſſembly*, and a not leſs *ſacred order* of—*Whites* and *Reds*.

About ten years ago, in a field contiguous to the Watergate, where a range of well-built houſes now ſtands, ſome labourers diſcovered, very little below the ſurface, the remains of a Roman Hypocauſt,

pocauſt, and Sudatory, or ſweating bath, with a beautiful Roman altar, inſcribed to Æſculapius. But the whole was unfortunately deſtroyed by the rude hands of ignorance before a proper drawing of them could be taken.

Immediately on paſſing through the Watergate, you enter Crane-ſtreet on the right, which conſiſts of new, uniformly-arranged houſes; on the left are ſome genteel dwellings, denominated, in alluſion to their pleaſant ſituation, *Paradiſe-row*.

Oppoſite to theſe, is that beautiful piece of ground, called the Roodee; where the races are annually run on the firſt week in May; a diverſion for which this ſpot of earth is better calculated than perhaps any other in the univerſe, not a ſingle yard of the view being loſt by the eye of the ſpectator in any ſituation. This meeting has long been the reſort of perſonages of the firſt rank;—others may excel it in *number*, but not in *elegance* or *faſhion*. The Roodee is remarkable for being the place of interment of an image of the Virgin Mary, with a very large croſs, in the year 946. The place of the reſidence of this *pious* lady was, in a Chriſtian temple at Hawarden, in Flintſhire, where, in thoſe days of ſuperſtition, they uſed to offer up their oriſons to this idol. To her they applied for relief under every affliction; till at laſt it happened, while they were on their knees invoking her for a few gentle ſhowers to ſoften their parch'd land (the carpenter not having ſecurely faſtened her *Goddeſſ-ſhip*) ſhe very unpolitely fell upon the head of the governor of the caſtle's wife, Lady Trawſt; the effect of which was immediately fatal. For this offence the goddeſs was indicted, and tried by a

ſpecial

ſpecial jury, who, after a wiſe and ſolemn trial, found her guilty of *wilful murder*, and ſhe *received ſentence of death!* One juror propoſed *hanging*; another, *drowning*; till, from motives of fear, being a goddeſs, they agreed not to take her *life*, but *baniſh* her, by leaving her on the ſands of the river; from whence (the *waters* not paying much reſpect to her *ſacred* perſon) ſhe was carried away by the tide, and *drowned!* Her *body* was the next day found near the place now called the Roodee; on which it was interred, with all *due pomp*, by the inhabitants of *Cheſter*, and a large ſtone erected over the grave (a veſtige of which ſtill remains as a memento of the ignorance of thoſe days) whereon appeared the following inſcription:

The Jews their God did crucify,
The Hardeners theirs did drown,
'Cauſe with their wants ſhe'd not ſupply,
And lies under this cold ſtone.

What the good folks of Hawarden did for a goddeſs to ſupply this loſs, we are not told; though it is probable they were not long *unfurniſh'd*, when it is conſidered that they poſſeſſed *wit* and *wood* enough to *make* one.

On the weſt ſide of the Roodee ſtands that aſylum for age and indigence, the Houſe of Induſtry; which ſeldom contains leſs than 200 perſons.

Nearly adjoining is the New River (cut through a large ſpace of white ſands in 1735-6) which is navigable for veſſels of 350 tons burthen. Here are excellent conveniencies for ſhip-building, in which our artizans particularly excel. From the quays are exported ſome of the *richeſt* cargoes of that excellent commodity which affords to the taſte

of

of the Londoners the moſt grateful flavour, and preſents the Cockney with what he calls, " the *fatteſt Velſh rabbits* in the *Vorld*,"—good old *Cheſhire cheeſe*.

Northgate-ſtreet is about 440 yards long; the entrance into which was, till within theſe few years, much incommoded by a projection of ſhops, which have, by voluntary ſubſcription, been removed. On the right of this ſtands the Theatre-Royal.—No circumſtance can evince the ſtrange mutations to which things are liable, more than this place; which was originally a *chapel*, dedicated to St. *Nicholas*, and devoted to *religion*; afterwards a *common-hall*, devoted to *juſtice*; next, a *warehouſe*, devoted to *trade*; and now, a *playhouſe*, devoted to *amuſement*. [It is worthy remark, that, as the very reverſe of this fact, the late theatre in Liverpool is now occaſionally uſed as a conventicle by a ſect of diſſenters.]

The regular market for fiſh and vegetables is in the ſquare, oppoſite to the Exchange, which in general are plentiful and reaſonable. In that uſeful article, ſalmon, no market in the kingdom did, ſome few years ago, excel it; indeed ſuch was the profuſion of this valuable fiſh, that maſters were often reſtricted, by a clauſe of indenture, from giving it more than twice a week to their apprentices! —Though the bounty of Providence, in this particular, is yet unabated, ſuch reſtriction is no longer neceſſary—ſome *artificial* cauſe, or other, very *kindy* rendering this fiſh, at the preſent day, a *delicacy* even to the *maſters* themſelves.

The Exchange is a large, handſome pile, ſupported by five columns in the centre. It is 126 feet

feet long, and 46 broad; and has a row of ſhops on the Weſt ſide. The year 1698 was the time of its erection, in the mayoralty of Colonel Robert Whitley. The quarter ſeſſions, and the annual election of city officers, are held here in a large, commodious common-hall. The Exchange alſo contains a manſion-houſe, for the occaſional entertainment of the corporate body; in which the winter aſſemblies for the trades-people are held; here is likewiſe a well-choſen ſubſcription library.

A little beyond the Exchange ſtand the three Fleſh-ſhambles, for the reception of country butchers, which occupy a conſiderable part of the ſtreet; upon the centre one is placed a ciſtern or reſervoir of water (conveyed by pipes from the water-works at the Bridge) which ſupplies the dwellings in the Abbey-court, and the adjacent ones in that part of the city.

On the Weſt ſide of the ſhambles is Parſons-lane, or Princes-ſtreet, leading to a pleaſant and airy range of buildings, called St. Martin's-in-the-fields; oppoſite to which, adjoining to the Walls, ſtands, in a moſt delightful and ſalubrious ſituation, that noble edifice, The Infirmary, a very ſpacious and elegant building, erected in 1761—the comfortable retreat of diſeaſe and penury, from every part of the county, the city, and North Wales.

On the Eaſt of the ſhambles is the entrance into the Abbey-court; over the gateway of which is the Regiſter-office, where wills are depoſited. The preſent regiſter is Benjamin Keene, Eſq.—his deputy, W. Nichols, Eſq.—The Abbey-court is a neat and pleaſant ſquare, with an obeliſk in the centre, ſurrounded by a large circle of iron paliſades—

liſades—the houſes regularly and handſomely built; on the South ſide is the Biſhop's palace, a large ſtone pile, erected in 1753;—the Gothic ſtructure of St. Thomas's chapel (the reſidence of the late Dean Smith) has been very judiciouſly taken down; and on the ſite thereof a ſpacious manſion, more deſcriptive of the heart of his ſucceſſor, Dean Cotton, is erected.—The Abbey-ſtreet leads to the Walls, and to the Kale-yards, a ſpot of ground in former times the kitchen-garden of the church, furniſhing the *reverend abbot*, *mortifying monks*, and other *abſtemious fathers* of the monaſtery, with a *few* of the *good things* of the earth.

Immediately on paſſing through the Northgate, on the left, as you enter Further Northgate-ſtreet, ſtands The Blue-coat ſchool; adjoining to which is the chapel, dedicated to St. John Baptiſt;—this ſeminary, which receives a certain number of poor boys, furniſhing them with education, board, and apparel, beſides a ſmall ſum as an apprentice-fee, is a moſt exemplary inſtitution, and as ſuch meets with liberal ſupport. The preſent maſter is Mr. Matthew Clemenſon.—There is alſo a Blue-ſchool for girls, and a Green-cap ſchool for boys; which, in addition to thoſe modern ſeminaries of virtue, Sunday-ſchools, all ſupported by voluntary ſubſcription, do credit to the hearts of the inhabitants, and afford the moſt pleaſing proſpect of their ſalutary effects on the minds and manners of the riſing generation.

Behind the Blue-coat ſchool are ſix alms-houſes, each of which contains a venerable matron, whoſe evening of life here paſſes away in peace, ſerenity, and content.

On

On the oppoſite ſide of the ſtreet ſtands a *ſeminary* of a very different kind—The Bridewell, or Houſe of Correction; where crimes of an *inferior* order receive an *inferior*, but wholeſome, ſort of caſtigation.

Bridge-ſtreet is open and ſpacious; its length from the Croſs to the Bridge about 553 yards.—On the weſt ſide is Common-hall-lane, ſo called from being the place where the common-hall of the city was once kept.—Near the Plume-of-Feathers inn, in the above ſtreet, is a Roman bath, but the only part obſervable is the Hypocauſt, the form of which is rectangular, ſupported by thirty-two pillars, two feet ten inches and a half high, and about 18 inches diſtant from each other. Upon each is a tile, 18 inches ſquare, and over them a perforated tile, two feet ſquare; which appear over all the pillars, ſtanding on a mortar floor ſpread over the rock. The ſmoke iſſued thro' a vent on the ſouth ſide. Here is an anti-chamber, where the ſlaves attended to heat the place. The perſons who uſed to participate in this *warm enjoyment* ſat in an apartment above, called the ſweating-chamber.

Lower down is White-friars-lane, ſo called from a convent of Carmelites, or White-friars, in St. Martin's pariſh. On the oppoſite ſide the way, a little lower down, is Pepper-ſtreet, which leads on the left to Newgate-ſtreet, and on the right to the Nine-houſes and Duke-ſtreet. On the right of Lower Bridge-ſtreet, is Cuppin's-lane, a name derived from a Cupping-houſe or *Bagnio* being formerly therein. This leads to Martin's-Aſh; alſo, thro' Bunce-lane, to Glover-ſtone and the Caſtle. In St. Martin's-pariſh was a convent of Benedictine Nuns, dedicated to St. Mary; which fell, in the

the general devaſtation of religious houſes, in 1537. The rural and pleaſant garden now occupied by Mr. George Rogers, was the place where this convent ſtood, veſtiges of the walls and arches of which yet remain.

Glover-ſtone is remarkable for ſeparating the city from the Caſtle, and is a part of the county where non-freemen may exerciſe their trades in undiſturbed ſecurity.—Here the bodies of unfortunate convicts are delivered into the cuſtody of the city ſheriffs, for execution: A cuſtom accounted for only by tradition, that when the city, by Henry the VIIth's charter, was made a county of itſelf, the citizens, to prevent any infraction of their territories, voluntarily took upon themſelves this ſad and melancholy office, rather than the county officers ſhould exerciſe the leaſt authority within their juriſdiction.—The citizens of the preſent day, however tenacious they may be of their *rights* and *liberties*, will, we preſume, readily acknowledge that their anceſtors went a little too far in this particular; the *privilege* of *hanging* being an *honour* which they would, no doubt, at any time very willingly forego.

Another tradition ſays, that a culprit was once reſcued from the jaws of death, on his way to the fatal tree, by the citizens, for which this diſagreeable taſk has been ſince inflicted upon their ſucceſſors, by way of puniſhment.

The Caſtle conſiſts of two wards, upper and lower; the entrance into each of which is ſtrongly ſecured by ponderous gates, having round baſtions on each ſide:—"The ſtealing hand of time," having undermined the battlements of the upper ward, fronting

fronting the walls, they have been of late handſomely rebuilt.—Here are convenient apartments and lodging rooms for the judges of the circuit, furniſhed at the expence of the city ſheriffs.—The Shire-hall (which was the ſtate-apartment of Hugh Lupus) is lofty and capacious; conſiſtent with the hoſpitality and dignity of the firſt Norman Earl.—A conſiderable part of this hall is now taken down, the county having, about three years ago, begun the arduous but neceſſary work of erecting an entirely new gaol, court, offices, *&c. &c.* on a more enlarged and commodious plan; agreeably to an act of Parliament previouſly paſſed for the purpoſe.—The preſent gaol is within the Caſtle; adjoining to which is the Prothonotary's office.—The preſent prothonotary, Edward Read, Eſq. his deputy, Alexander Eaton, Eſq.—The caſtle has a governor, lieutenant-governor, and conſtable, and is garriſoned by two companies of invalids.—In the caſtle-yard are ſeveral very pleaſant dwellings.

Below the entrance of Caſtle-ſtreet is an antient manſion, which is rendered memorable, for being the reſidence of Charles the Firſt, during the ſiege of the city.

Oppoſite to Caſtle-ſtreet is Olave-lane:—On paſſing through the newly-erected arch at the bottom of Bridge-ſtreet, you go over a bridge, of ſeven arches, inconveniently narrow and contracted; when you enter Handbridge, ſtiled by the Welſh *Tre Boeth*, or Burnt-town; which leads, on the right, to Wrexham and Northop, and on the left to Eaton-boat.—In a field contiguous to Handbridge is a rock, on the front of which is cut the *Dea Armigera*, Minerva with her bird and altar.

tar. This is ſaid to be the ſpot where the palace of the ambitious Edgar ſtood, though not a veſtige remains to confirm the aſſertion. From this part of the river, the above Monarch (in 973) had the *ſingular felicity* of being rowed by eight ſubordinate and tributary *Kings*, to the monaſtery of St. John Baptiſt.

CHURCHES.

Cathedral.—This ſtately and ſublime fabric ſtands on the Eaſt ſide of the Northgate-ſtreet; the reigns of Henry VI. VII. and VIII. are mentioned as the periods in which the greater part of this ſacred edifice (now remaining) was erected. Simon Ripley, choſen abbot in 1485, built the broad-aile. The abby, which gave birth to this ſee, was of ſuch antiquity as to have been a nunnery more than eleven hundred years ago, founded by Wulpherus, king of the Mercians, for his daughter St. Werburgh; who, the good wives of the preſent day will wonder to hear, took the veil after living *three years* with her huſband Ceolredus, in a ſtate of *veſtal purity!!!* Whether this chaſte lady's *immaculacy* was more aſcribable to a *conſtitutional coldneſs*, or a *ſpiritual heat*, hiſtorians have not been kind enough to inform us; nor even have they vouchſafed to ſay, what ſort of a *man* her *huſband* was.

The buildings were next reſtored by Ethelfleda, of pious memory, and the *fair nuns* were very *unpolitely* ſupplanted by a ſet of *canons*. Theſe *pieces* of *holy ordnance* were, in their turn, *diſcharged* by Hugh Lupus; who, *ſans ceremonie*, placed in this *ſpiritual garriſon* a well-fed *body* of *Benedictines*. The *canons* made a *loud report*, and *carried* the

force of their complaints a *long way*; but to little purpoſe—the Earl was peremptory.

At the riſing of that *Sun* of Reformation, Henry VIII. a general *diſſolution* of what were called *religious houſes* followed, and this *reverend body*, with others, were *diſſolved*;—a *limb* of the body (Thomas Clerke, the abbot) excepted; who, after a ſtubborn refuſal, wiſely ſurrendered, by ſelling his *creed* for the *deanery*, and embracing the *principles* of the *reformation* and a *good living* at the ſame moment.

The neatneſs of the choir, and the Gothic appearance of the tabernacle work, have a pleaſing effect on the eye. The biſhop's throne, which is ſuperbly ornamented, is ſaid to have been the antient ſhrine of St. Werburgh. It is encircled by a beautiful group of ſmall images, intended to repreſent ſaints, and Kings of *Mercia*. Some of theſe, either by accident or meddling fingers, were, a few years ago, decapitated; accordingly a *maſon* was employed to *mend* their *Majeſties*; but the artiſt, not being very well acquainted with either *ſaints* or *ſovereigns*, unluckily tranſpoſed their *caputs*, by putting *kings' heads* upon *queens' ſhoulders*, and *vice verſa*. To the body of a tender, virgin ſaint, he placed the head of a veteran monarch!—What ſort of a *head* the artiſt muſt have had, we will not pretend to ſay: This much, however, he might truly have boaſted---that he knew how "*to put* old *heads upon* young *ſhoulders!*"

Here are ſeveral elegant monuments, particularly one to the memory of Sir Wm. Mainwaring, a young officer, who fell in defence of the city, during the ſiege.—The broad-aile has, of late, been

been much enriched by the erection of a few of theſe marble records of mortality; among which is one to the memory of the late Dean Smith; another to the memory of Mr. Ogden, ſurgeon; a third, to the memory of Mr. Phillips, an American loyaliſt; and ('tho' *laſt* not *leaſt* in our dear love') a fourth, to the memory of the late Chancellor Peploe—whoſe beſt monument is engraven on the *hearts* of the poor within the wide and extenſive circle of his bounty.

Behind the choir is St. Mary's chapel, where *two or three aſſemble together*, offering up their oriſons, at the early hour of ſix every morning.—The preſent miniſter is, the Rev. Mr. Winfeld.—Adjoining to the entrance into this chapel, ſtands a tomb, *ſaid* to contain the duſt of *royalty*; tradition telling us, that the remains of Henry IV. Emperor of Germany, lie there;—be this as it may, the *report* merely has given ſuch a *value* to the bones, (ſome of them being eaſily withdrawn from the coffin) that their appearance, while it has often *lengthen'd* the *face* of the *inquirer*, by adding to his *ſurprize*—has ſometimes *lengthen'd* the *purſe* of the *ſexton*, by adding to his *fee*. The ſouth is very ſpacious, and is the pariſh church of St. Oſwald.—A chapel-of-eaſe to this church ſtands more than four miles from Cheſter.—The preſent vicar of St. Oſwald's is, the Rev. Mr. Broadhurſt; his curate, the Rev. Mr. Clarke.——On the north ſide of the broad aile are the cloiſters; in which is that beautiful, well-finiſhed edifice, The Chapter-houſe, where the bones of ſeveral earls and abbots lie in peaceful obſcurity.—It is 50 feet in length, 26 in width, and 35 in heighth.—The ſuppoſition is, that it was

erected by Randal Meſchines, Earl of Cheſter, who died in 1128.—In the cloiſters is a flight of ſteps, which led to thoſe *ſacred* retreats, the *dormitory*, *kitchen*, and *cellars*, of the venerable monks.—Here is an excellent free-ſchool, for 24 boys, founded by Henry VIII. The Rev. Mr. Bancroft, head maſter.

There are in this ſee two ardeaconries, Cheſter and Richmond; it is a ſuffragan to York; and the dioceſe includes Cheſhire and Lancaſhire, a part of Cumberland, Weſtmoreland, Flintſhire, and Denbighſhire. It contains 256 pariſhes, 101 of which are impropriate. The biſhopric is valued in the king's books, 420l. 1s. 8d. and the tenths of the clergy, amount to 435l. 12s. per annum. ——The firſt biſhop of Cheſter was John Bird, in 1541; the preſent biſhop, The Right Rev. William Cleaver, S. T. P. The Rev. George Cotton, L L. D. dean. The Rev. George Travis, A. M. archdeacon of Cheſter. The Rev. Thomas Townſon, D. D. archdeacon of Richmond. The Rev. John Briggs, A. M. chancellor of the dioceſe. Rev. Richard Jacſon, D. D. Rev. Thomas Moſtyn, A. M. Rev. John Briggs, A. M. Rev. Thomas Ward, A. M. Rev. Thomas Pearce, A. M. Rev. George Travis, A. M. prebends. Rev. Jonathan Johnſon, L L. B. præcentor. Rev. Joſeph Eaton, A. M. ſachriſt. Rev. Jonathan Johnſon, L L. B. Rev. John Prince, A. M. Rev. Joſeph Eaton, A. M. Rev. James Winfield, Rev. Thomas Bancroft, A. M. Rev. Thomas Maudſley, A. M. minor canons.

St. John Baptiſt.—This church ſtands without the walls, in a moſt delightful ſituation, on the eaſt ſide

ſide of the city; it was once a collegiate church, founded by King Ethelred, in 689, in conſequence of a viſionary admonition, to build it on the ſpot where he ſhould find a white hind. The weſt ſide of the ſteeple now preſents an imperfect figure of this legend. The church is a magnificent pile, and evidently of Saxon origin; there are no remains of the north and ſouth tranſeps, and a great part of the eaſt end is demoliſhed by the fall of the center tower. The chapels above the old choir (now the pariſh church) preſent melancholy pictures of the ravages of Time; to the eye of the antiquary, their *ruins* are a *rich feaſt*. A dean, ſeven prebendaries, ſeven vicars, two clerks, and other *ſpiritual ſubalterns*, belonging to this church, were all *melted down* at the *general diſſolution*. Here is an anchorite's cell, where Harold, after his defeat at Haſtings, is ſaid to have cloſed his eyes.—The preſent vicar is, the Rev. Mr. Richardſon.

St. Peter.—The ſituation of this church is in the center of the city, and had, till lately, a lofty ſpire ſteeple; the want of which, at preſent, exhibits ſo naked and dilapidated an appearance, that the *church* (pardon the alluſion) gives us the idea of a *lady*, on a windy day, having loſt her *high-crown'd hat!*—Several *briefs* have been *read*, ſubſcriptions propoſed, and ſome liberal *offerings* from individuals made, to reſtore this ornamental *object*; but, alas! if the inhabitants at *large* do not throw in their mite, we fear (to uſe the words of a certain author) "Poor St. Peter muſt *go to bed* many winters without his *night-cap*."——Rev. Rigby Baldwin, A. M. rector; Rev. T. Maudſley, A. M. curate.

Trinity.—This church, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, ſtands in the Watergate-ſtreet; the inſide has been, within theſe few years, enlarged, which has added much to its convenience and beauty. It has a handſome ſpire ſteeple.—The preſent rector is, the Rev. Mr. Maddock, A. M.

St. Bridget.—This church, tho' ſmall, is neat and convenient, having, within theſe few years, undergone ſeveral conſiderable improvements. It is ſituated on the weſt ſide of Bridge-ſtreet.—Rev. T. Nelſon, rector: Rev. J. Winfield, curate.

St. Michael.—This church is ſituated exactly oppoſite to the above; a circumſtance which gives them the appellation of *The Two Churches.* It is alſo neat and convenient, and was, a few years ago, beautified and improved.—The preſent miniſter is, the Rev. J. Eaton, A. M.

St. Mary.—This church ſtands in the ſouth weſt part of the city; the inſide is ornamented with ſome beautiful monuments belonging to the Gamul and Troutbeck families.—The Rev. Robert Hill, A. M. rector; Rev. J. Willan, curate; the latter gentleman is alſo chaplain to the Caſtle.

St. Olave.—This church ſtands in the lower part of Bridge-ſtreet, oppoſite Caſtle-ſtreet.—The Rev. Mr. Crane, miniſter.

St. Martin.—This church ſtands at a place call'd The Aſh, in the ſouth weſt part of the city; it is now much improving.---Rev. J. Rigby, A. M. rector; Rev. H. Humphries, A. M. curate.

Excluſive of the forementioned places of worſhip, there are not leſs than ſix conventicles for diſſenters of different denominations. So that there can be little apprehenſion with regard to the *ſpiritual welfare*

fare of the inhabitants. In Cow-lane ſtands the meeting-houſe where thoſe friendly ſet of people called Quakers exerciſe their mode of worſhip. Behind this is their burial ground.---The Independents have alſo a place of interment at the back of their chapel in Queen-ſtreet; of this meeting the Rev. Mr. Armitage is miniſter.---In that part of Foregate-ſtreet oppoſite Love-lane, is the Romiſh chapel, under which is a houſe where the prieſt of that perſuaſion uſually reſides.

In addition to the charities beforementioned, there is alſo an excellent foundation for thirty decayed freemen, to each of whom is allowed the ſum of 4l. annually, and a gown every third year. Every candidate muſt be beyond his 60th year. This venerable group walk in proceſſion to church on public days; the appearance of whom commands that reſpect from the ſpectators, which *honorable age* never fails to inſpire. The late Mr. Owen Jones, butcher, (one of the donors to this charity) bequeathed the annual profits of an eſtate in Denbighſhire, to the *poor* of the ſeveral city companies, in rotation; which bequeſt (tho' only a few pounds at firſt) now, from the ſingular diſcovery of a lead-mine thereon, produces little leſs than *four hundred pounds per annum!* An acquiſition which has been a *bone* of no ſmall contention among the *rich* as well as *poor* freemen.

There are thirty alms-houſes in Cheſter (excluſive of ſix behind the Blue-coat ſchool)---namely, ten in St. Michael's pariſh; four in St. John's; ſix in Common hall-lane; ſix in St. Olave's pariſh; and four in Trinity; all of them with ſmall endowments, the comfortable retreat of *grey heads* and *contented hearts*.

NANTWICH.

NANTWICH.

THIS town is ſituated upon the river Weaver, near the borders of Staffordſhire and Shropſhire, the direct poſt-road from Holyhead (*via* Cheſter) to London; from which laſt city it is diſtant 162 miles N. W. Its ſituation is in a fertile vale, encircled by ſome of the richeſt cheeſe land in the county; ſeveral of the neighbouring dairies producing ſingle cheeſes from 120 to 140 pounds weight!. The town is almoſt a mile in length from Eaſt to Weſt, and about three quarters from North to South, containing ſeveral large and ſpacious ſtreets, more than 600 houſes, and hath a good weekly market on Saturday, filled with the plenteous produce of the country; it has alſo three annual fairs; namely, March 26, Sept. 4, and Dec. 15. Nantwich confers the title of Baron upon George James Viſcount Malpas and Earl of Cholmondeley. His Lordſhip hath tolls of cattle, roots, and fruit. The tolls of corn and fiſh belong to John Crewe, of Crewe, Eſq. who is patron of the church.---It is a circumſtance of ſome ſurprize, that a place ſo antient and conſiderable hath never been incorporated by law, in the manner of many others of leſs conſequence and antiquity; but this may be accounted for by the ſeparate juriſdictions and fees into which it hath been ſplit and divided; and the entire government of it having never long been veſted in any ſingle Lord.---The inhabitants enjoy one peculiar advantage; which is, an exemption from ſerving upon juries out of the town, or mixt with ſtrangers; confirmed to them by Queen Elizabeth, in the tenth year of her reign.—

reign.---In the year 1438 it ſuffered greatly by fire, but much more deplorably in 1583, in the 26th year of Elizabeth. On the 12th of June, 1604, the plague broke out, and continued till the 2d of March following, deſtroying between four and five hundred perſons.---In the month of Auguſt, 1617, King James I. honoured this town with his preſence, and took up his reſidence at *Town's-end*, the houſe of *Thomas Wilbraham*, Eſq. He ſhewed great pleaſure in viſiting the ſalt-works, and had a ſermon preached before him at the pariſh church.---This town was beſieged, in the unhappy days of Charles I. in the firſt week in January, 1643, by *Lord Byron's* party. The ſiege was raiſed, on St. Paul's day, the 25th of January, by *General Fairfax* defeating *Byron*.---There is an alms-houſe erected at the end of the *Hoſpital-ſtreet*, founded in 1638, by Sir *Edmund Wright*, Knight, for ſix poor men. Another at the end of *Beam-ſtreet*, erected by *John Crewe*, Eſq. in the year 1667, for ſeven men and their wives. Another at the end of the *Welſh-row*, founded by Sir *Roger Wilbrahan*, Knight, Maſter of Requeſts to *James* I. in 1613, for four poor men of *Nantwich*, and for two of the adjacent pariſh of *Acton*. There are four alms-houſes alſo in the *Welſh-row*, for eight widows, and two for ſingle women, founded by the anceſtors of the *Wilbrahams*, of *Town's-end*. There are four alms-houſes in the *Love-lane*, for four men and their wives, ſupported by the charities of Mr. *John Bromhall* and Mrs. *Ermine Delves*. Beſides theſe alms-houſes, there are many annual charitable donations left for various deſcriptions of poor. There is a free-ſchool,

founded

founded by *John* and *Thomas Thruſh*, wool-packers, of *London*, and natives of *Nantwich*. Here is alſo another ſchool, where forty poor boys are clothed, and inſtructed in Engliſh, called The Blue Caps, ſupported chiefly by the family of *Wilbraham*, of *Town's-end*; and the ſalary has been augmented by the liberality of the *Crewe-family*. In the year 1780 was erected and eſtabliſhed a very large and commodious work-houſe, within that part of the townſhip called *Beam-heath*, and within the barony thereof, in conſequence of a grant from the Right Hon. *George James* Earl of *Cholmondeley*. This valuable and very extenſive tract of land was given to the inhabitants of *Nantwich*, in the 14th year of *Edward* I.—The church is an antient and noble edifice, in the form of a croſs, with the ſteeple riſing from the middle.

It is a pity, but that the ſame gentlemen, and principal tradeſmen, who exerted themſelves in erecting the work-houſe before-mentioned, for the relief and comfort of the poor, would once more exert themſelves, for the credit of the town, and the health of the inhabitants, by removing the *ſlaughter-houſes* and *ſhambles* from their preſent ſituation, being now a *real nuiſance* in the centre of the town. If the ſlaughter-houſes were ſituated below the bridge, and the ſpot of ground, called *Snow-hill*, was allotted and formed into a ſquare, ſufficient to contain the ſhambles, fiſh-market, and green-market, there would be more convenience, as well as decency. Theſe reforms would greatly contribute to the purity of the air, and healthfulneſs of the people; for bad air is next to bad water,

ter, a frequent cauſe of ſickneſs, particularly of the putrid kind.

The name of the town is derived from its ſituation, *Nant*, in the Britiſh language, ſignifying a vale. It gives name to the whole hundred.

NORTHWICH.

This town ſtands where the river Dane falls into the Weaver, 17 miles N. E. from Cheſter, and 16 N. from Nantwich. Its weekly market is on Friday, and its fairs (two annually) are on the 2d of Auguſt, and the 6th of December. Theſe latter aſſemblages of trade are here become very great, to the no ſmall advantage of the inhabitants, as well as ſtrangers who reſort to them.—The fame of this town is extenſively diffuſed, for its ſalt-works, which are very conſiderable, and which give employment to a reſpectable fleet of ſmall veſſels between that place and Liverpool; affording a nautical nurſery, where many a brave ſeaman has received the rudiments of an education which have led him to *glory*, and enabled him to render the moſt eſſential ſervices to his country!—The importance and advantages derived to government from the Northwich ſalt-works alone, will be better underſtood when we ſay, that the duties for a ſingle year only, amount to more than 116,000l.

This place is not, however, merely a *ſalt-water ſeminary*; here is an excellent grammar-ſchool, handſomely endowed, and founded in 1554, by Sir John Dean.—This part of the county is *rich* in gentlemen's ſeats, which are delightfully ſituated.

MIDDLEWICH.

MIDDLEWICH

Is a town which derives its name from ſtanding in the *middle* of two *Wiches*; namely, between Nantwich and Northwich.—The ſituation of this place is on the river *Croke*, 156 miles from London. The proſperity and opulence of this town, like the former, may be ſaid to be, principally, *preſerved* by *ſalt*; very conſiderable quantities being made here. Its weekly market is on Tueſday; and its two fairs are annually held on the 25th of July, and on Holy-Thurſday. Middlewich is a deanery, hath burgeſſes, and other privileges, as the reſt of the *Wiches* have. Half a mile N. E. from the town is the goodly manor-place of Kinderton, belonging to Lord Vernon, called *The Barn of Kinderton*. The town is well-built, and a deſirable place of reſidence, not only for pleaſantneſs of ſituation, but, what is far better, for the friendly and hoſpitable diſpoſition of its inhabitants.

MACCLESFIELD.

This town exhibits another very ſtriking inſtance of the ſalutary effects of a ſtaple manufacture: Employment here, in the articles of ſilk and buttons, having added to the number of inhabitants ſo much, that Macclesfield is ſaid to be as populous as Cheſter, containing not leſs than fifteen or ſixteen thouſand ſouls! an aſtoniſhingly rapid, and indeed ſingular, increaſe of population. The town ſtands on the edge of Macclesfield foreſt, upon a high bank; at the foot whereof runneth a ſmall river,

river, named *Bollin*. Its diſtance is 170 miles from London; has a market on Monday; and five fairs, viz. on the 6th of May, the 22d of June, the 11th of July, the 4th of October, and the 11th of November.

CONGLETON.

THIS town is ſeated on the river Dane, 161 miles from London, and eight S. W. from Macclesfield. Here are two churches, one in the town, the other at the bridge-end, on the oppoſite ſide of the river. A ſilk manufactory and a ſilk mill here give employment and bread to ſeveral hundred people. The town is neat, and has a charter of incorporation. Saturday is their market-day; and their four fair days are, on the Friday preceding Shrove Tueſday, on the 12th of May, the 13th of July, and the 22d of November.

STOCKPORT.

THIS is a town of great and growing population, evincing the certain and conſiderable benefits which flow from the hand of labour and toil. It is the reſidence of many ſpirited and opulent manufacturers, who, in the articles of ſilk, cotton, and check, give employment and bread to many hundred induſtrious families. It ſtands on the river Merſey, and is diſtant from London 175 miles. Its weekly market is on Friday. The number of fairs in the year are four, viz. on the 4th and 25th of March, on the 1ſt of May, and 25th of October.

KNUTSFORD.

KNUTSFORD

Is divided, as it were, into two towns; for which reaſon it is called, in King's Vale Royal, High and Low Knutsford. Each of them has a church. The ſituation is pleaſant, and the town is neat. Its diſtance from London is 158 miles. Here are two annual fairs, viz. July 10, and November 8. Its weekly market is on Saturday. The annual race-meeting at Knutsford is remarkable for being honoured with a more brilliant aſſemblage of nobility and gentry, than any other in the county; not excepting even Cheſter.

ALTRINCHAM.

THIS is a ſmall market town, having two annual fairs, viz. on the 5th of Auguſt, and on the 22d of November. Its weekly market is on the Tueſday. Some London *idolators* have a *good-natured* ſaying, "the farther from the capital, the farther from arts and civilization!" This little ſpot is one among the many in the kingdom, which may be adduced as ſtriking exceptions to ſo curious a remark; for though Altrincham is ſituated at the diſtance of 184 miles from the capital, it is the ſeat of a conſiderable manufactory in the worſted branch; and, for civilization, though they may not have laid in ſo large a ſtock of *complaiſance* as ſome *cocknies*, they are in poſſeſſion of a *commodity* that will laſt longer and *wear* better, namely—*plain dealing*.

SANDBACH.

SANDBACH.

THIS town ſtands on a high bank, upon the little river Wheelock; the place is ſmall, and was made a market town by Sir John Radcliffe, Lord thereof; which market is continued weekly every Thurſday, it hath alſo two annual fairs. King's Vale Royal tells us, that in the market place are two ſquare croſſes of ſtone, or ſteps, with certain images and writings thereon engraven; which a man cannot read, except he be turned *topſey-turvey*, and his head where his heels ſhould be; a ſituation the author's head muſt certainly have been in when he penned two ſuch *elegant* couplets; which are tranſcribed for the *entertainment* of the reader:

In Sandbach, in the Sandy Ford,
Lieth the ninth part of Dublin hord,
Nine to, or Nine fro,
Take me down or elſe I fall.

Whether the *treaſure* was ever found, the hiſtory of the place does not inform us. Sandbach contains a well-built ſtone church.

FRODSHAM.

THIS town is pleaſantly ſituated ten miles N. E. from Cheſter; it conſiſts of no more than one long ſtreet: about half-a-mile South from the town ſtands the church, and near it a great hill, called Overton-hill, the lofty ſituation of which commands extenſive and beautiful proſpects, inferior to none in the kingdom; highly worthy the notice of travellers; giving delight to the man of taſte, and often renovation of health to the valetudinarian. It hath a good weekly market.

TARPORLEY.

TARPORLEY

Is ſituated ten miles S. E. of Cheſter, on the London road, and is a pleaſant market-town. Here is a handſome church. This town is remarkable for a meeting of the leading gentlemen of the county, at an annual hunt, not more diſtinguiſhed for the pleaſures of the chace, than for the feſtive joy, conviviality, and friendſhip, which uſually preſide on the occaſion at the plentiful board of honeſt Southon, of the Swan inn. Not far from the town ſtand, upon a very high eminence, the ruins of Beeſton-caſtle, an object ſeen from the extreme parts of the county.

MALPAS

Is called, in Latin, *Malus Paſſus*, a name derived from the road to it not having been very pleaſant or agreeable. It is in the ſouth corner of the county, within three miles of Shropſhire, Denbighſhire, and Flintſhire. It hath three ſtreets paved, a grammar ſchool, and a charitable foundation, both erected by Sir Ranulph Brereton. Here is a weekly market, and a fair yearly on the 8th of December. Here is an excellent church, the princely revenues of which afford a very handſome endowment to two rectors and two curates: the preſent incumbents are gentlemen not leſs eminent for their learning than their piety. In this church is a vault belonging to Earl Cholmondeley, where a long race of the remains of that nobleman's anceſtry are entombed.

About

About nine miles Eaſt of Malpas, and ſix South of Nantwich, ſtands Combermere-abbey (by a lake of the ſame name) founded by the Malbans, barons of Nantwich, and now the pleaſant and hoſpitable ſeat of Sir Robert Saluſbury Cotton, baronet, one of the repreſentatives in parliament for this county.

OVER.

THIS place, though diminutive and inſignificant in appearance at preſent, was once *large* in conſequence. It is yet important in prerogative, having a mayor, aldermen, and other corporate officers; of whoſe chartered rights they are as tenacious as the firſt corporation in the kingdom. Its ſituation is in Edſbury hundred; a city of that name (now conſigned to oblivion) having once ſtood on the chamber of Delamere foreſt. A mile North from Over ſtood the Abbey of Vale Royal, founded by King Edward I. which Vale Royal is now the manor-place of Mr. Holcroſt.

TARVIN.

THIS was formerly a market-town, inſtituted by Sir John Savage; which is now diſcontinued. It is a pleaſant village, and hath a well-built ſtone church: Here are depoſited the remains of Mr. Thomaſon, remembered for his unrivalled ability in the art of penmanſhip, which was manifeſted by the moſt beautiful and elaborate performance probably ever ſeen—a manuſcript prayer-book, preſented by the artiſt to the hand of royalty. Two croſs pens appear on his ſtone, typical of his peculiar excellence.

NESTON

Lies ten miles N. W. of Cheſter, in Wirral hundred, where is a good market on Friday. Its ſituation is highly favoured, the inhabitants enjoying the moſt deſirable advantages from purity of air and pleaſantneſs of proſpects. Nor are theſe advantages the leſs, from its contiguity to Parkgate, where the convenience of ſea-bathing is inferior to none; indeed, the growing attention ſhewn to it, during theſe ſeaſons, is a better proof of its accommodation in this particular, than any recommendation that can be given of it here. Both theſe towns are tolerably populous; and the intereſt and reputation of them have of late been not a little increaſed by the extenſive and brilliant patronage ſhewn to the Parkgate packets; which, from the regularity of their ſailing, the excellence of their accommodations, and every other advancage, ſeem to have a decided aſcendency over all others; and, in conſequence, Parkgate is become the reſort of elegance and faſhion. Theſe packets ſail regularly at leaſt four times a week.—Neſton contains a very good church.—The preſent rector, the Rev. T. Ward;—his curate, the Rev. R. Carter;—who is alſo maſter of a very reputable academy, for the tuition of young gentlemen.

CHRONOLOGY
OF
REMARKABLE EVENTS IN CHESTER.

1241 Sir Walter Lynnet choſen firſt mayor of Cheſter.
1285 King Edw. I. and his Queen viſited Cheſter, having conquered Wales.—*Alderſey's M. S.*
1294 This monarch again viſited Cheſter.
1300 Edward Prince of Wales honoured this city with a viſit, and received the homage of the freeholders in Wales.
1307 The tolls on corn, or murage duty, began.
1322 The Water-tower erected by John Helpſtone, a maſon, for which the city paid him the *vaſt ſum of* 100*l.*
1349 Bartram Northen, Eſq. mayor, was ſlain by Rich. Ditton, who was pardoned on paying 150 marks.—The title *Eſquire* was this year firſt given to the mayor.
1379 A buſhel of wheat ſold for 6d; a gallon of white wine for 6d; a gallon of claret for 4d; a fat gooſe for 2d; and a fat pig for 1d. A mayor's feaſt, containing all the dainties of the ſeaſon, coſt exactly *eleven ſhillings and ten-pence!*——*Alderſey's M. S.*
1397 Richard the Second viſited Cheſter.
1401 An award made that no tithe be paid to Trinity pariſh for the Roodee.
1437 The poor of Cheſter made bread of peas, vetches, and fern roots, wheat ſelling at 7s. a buſhel.
1441 Rockley and Rooley, gaolers of the Caſtle and Northgate, fought a pitch'd battle on the Roodee.
1455 Queen Margaret viſited Cheſter.

1463 Many

1463 Many citizens of Cheſter were ſlain at Mold fair, by Reginald Griffith, a Welchman, and his retinue.

1470 John's church covered with lead.

1489 This year St. Peter's ſteeple was pointed, when a gooſe was eaten by the parſon and others, upon the top thereof, and part caſt into the four ſtreets.—[*Would not the bones, could they now be found, be* ſweet picking *for the antiquarians of the eighteenth century?*]

1494 Henry VII. and his Queen, viſited Cheſter.

1506 The old ſteeple of St. Werburgh taken down.

1507 The ſweating ſickneſs very violent this year; 91 died in three days.

1508 Wheat ſold this year for 10d. a buſhel.

1517 The plague raged ſo ſhockingly, that the ſtreets were deſerted, and graſs grew a foot high at the Croſs.

1529 The play of Robert Cecil was acted at the Croſs, and the ſame was *newly gilt with gold!*

1533 The offering of ball and foot-ball put down, and the ſilver bell offered to the mayor on Shrove-Tueſday.

1536 Nunneries in Cheſter ſuppreſſed, and other religious houſes.

1549 This year there was a ſkirmiſh between the citizens and 500 Iriſh kernes; the latter were driven to Parkgate much hurt.

1550 This year a ſweating-ſickneſs, and great dearth, wheat ſelling at 16s. a buſhel.

1554 This year George Marſh was burnt alive at Spital Boughton, for the profeſſion of the goſpel. He was tried and condemned in the *ſpiritual* court at the cathedral by the biſhop.

1558 This year Dr. Cole came to Cheſter on his way to Ireland, with a commiſſion from the Queen for proſecuting (or rather perſecuting) the Proteſtants

teſtants in that kingdom. The commiſſioner lay at an inn then called the Blue-poſts, in Bridge-ſtreet (the houſe now occupied by Mr. Larden, woollen-draper) where he was viſited by the mayor, to whom, in the courſe of converſation, Dr. Cole communicated his errand, by taking a leather-box out of his cloak-bag, and ſaying, in a tone of exultation, "Here is what will laſh the heretics of Ireland!" This declaration accidentally ſtruck the ear of the miſtreſs of the houſe, who had a brother in Dublin; and, whilſt the commiſſioner was complimenting his worſhip down ſtairs, the good woman, prompted by an affectionate fear for the ſafety of her brother, opened the box, took out the commiſſion, and placed in lieu of it a pack of cards, with the knave of clubs uppermoſt.—This the Doctor carefully packed up, unobſerved and unſuſpecting; nor was the deception diſcovered till his arrival in the preſence of the Lord Deputy and privy council at the caſtle of Dublin. The ſurprize of the whole aſſembly, at the ſight of their *warrant officer*, the *knave*, may be more eaſily imagined than told! The Doctor, in ſhort, was immediately ſent back for a ſecond commiſſion, but, before he could return to Ireland, the Queen providentially died.—Elizabeth, her ſucceſſor, rewarded the woman (whoſe name was Elizabeth Edmunds) with a penſion of forty-pounds a year during her life.

1569 This year the two ſheriffs (Wm. Maſſey, gent. and Peter Licherband, tanner) fought a battle for which they were fined 10l. towards the repair of the walls.

1577 Country butchers firſt admitted to ſell in the city.

1578 Country

1578 Country bakers had this year the ſame privilege.

1587 A man was hanged, drawn, and quarter'd, for clipping money, and his quarters ſet on the four gates.

1589 The keeper of the caſtle (John Taylor) was hanged for killing Mr. Hockenhall, a priſoner in the gaol for *recuſancy!*

1590 Every man coming to be made free, ordered to bring furniture for his body, and to ſwear it was his own.

1595 Strong ale ordered to be ſold at 1d. per quart.

1601 One Candy's wife conſpired with one Boon to poiſon her huſband, for which they were both arraigned and found guilty. Boon was preſt to death, and the woman hanged.

1602 The great plague began this year in one Glover's houſe, in St. John's-lane. Cabins were built for the infected near the water ſide.

1617 King James viſited Cheſter, attended by many earls, biſhops, knights, *&c.* His Majeſty was preſented by the body corporate with a "ſtanding cup, covered, and 100 jacobins of gold therein."—The King attended divine ſervice in the minſter, and afterwards partook of a grand banquet in the pentice. He was graciouſly pleaſed to offer the honour of knighthood to the mayor, but the humility of his worſhip's mind *as graciouſly* refuſed it!

1710 This year the Roodee was incloſed by a cop

1732 A violent ſtruggle this year for the repreſentation of the city, between Sir Robert Groſvenor, Bart. and Richard Manley, Eſq. the firſt of whom was ſucceſsful —A ſevere conteſt alſo took place for the office of mayor, for which there were four candidates; namely, aldermen Mainwaring, Bennett, Johnſon, and Ellames. Johnſon prevailed.

1735 This

1735 This year there was a trial, at the county-hall, before Mr. Juſtice Verney, between John Williams, Eſq. alderman, Henry Bennett, and others, on the part of the citizens, plaintiffs; and Sir Robert Groſvenor, defendant;—when a verdict was given for the latter.

1739 In declaring war this year againſt Spain, Biſhop Peploe diſputed an entrance into the Abby Court; when the mayor ordered the gates to be forced open.

1745 A very warm conteſt for the repreſentation of the city took place between James Mainwaring, Eſq. Philip Henry Warburton, Eſq. and Sir Robert Groſvenor, Bart.—which terminated in favour of the two latter.

1750 Two Iriſhmen gibbeted on the Parkgate road for murder.

1754 Dr. Cowper, who was mayor this year, ſuppreſſed the veniſon feaſts of the corporation.—At one of theſe feaſts, in the mayoralty of Sir Richard Groſvenor, not leſs than *forty-two haunches of veniſon* were ſerved up!!!—How many *gouts* or *apoplexies* lay in ambuſh among theſe diſhes, is not eaſily told. It is, however, rather extraordinary, that theſe *feaſts* ſhould have been ſuppreſſed by no other perſon than a *Doctor!*

1756 Shops erected this year in the Exchange.

1763 Mary Heald burnt at Boughton for poiſoning her huſband.

1763 W. Wright killed by a fall from Peter's ſpire.

1767 Firſt ſtone of the Eaſtgate laid.

1768 Three men hung this year for houſe-breaking.—A ſingular circumſtance attended this execution; one of the unhappy men fell from the fatal tree immediately after being turned off; when, pulling up his cap, and looking at his unfortunate

unfortunate brother-ſufferers in a ſtate of ſuſpenſion, he exclaimed, *My God! what am I to ſuffer!*

1769 The race-courſe this year enlarged, and two ſtone chairs erected.

1771 An oppoſition for ſheriffs this year, between Mr. Thomas Edwards and Mr. Henry Rider, the former of whom ſucceeded.—This year the act paſſed for making an inland canal from Cheſter to Nantwich; on which account the city was illuminated!

1772 A horrid exploſion happened this year on the anniverſary night of the *Gunpowder Plot*, when a large ſtone building, up an entry in Watergate-ſtreet, occupied by George Williams, a puppet-ſhew-man, was blown up, and out of 140 people, 31 were killed, moſt of them upon the ſpot. It was occaſioned by ſeveral barrels of powder having been lodged under the building. The ſhock was felt ſeveral miles round the city.

1776 Chriſtopher Lawleſs, Iſaac Hutchinſon, Alexander Solomon, and Joſeph Iſaacs (two *Chriſtians* and two *Jews*) were this year executed for a burglary in the ſhop of Mr. Pemberton, ſilverſmith.

1777 One Samuel Thorley (a butcher's follower) from Congleton, was hanged and gibbetted, this year, for the murder of a young woman, a ballad-ſinger. The motive that influenced this wretch was, ſimply, avarice; as it appeared in evidence that he had ſlaughter'd the body after the manner of pork, and had actually made uſe of a part of it for food!

1786 This year there was a trial at Shrewſbury, before Baron Eyre, one of the twelve judges, and a ſpecial jury, between Mr. Ralph Eddowes, merchant, plaintiff (on behalf of the citizens) and

and Mr. Thomas Amery and Mr. John Monk, defendants. The queſtion was, whether the right of election of aldermen and common-council is annually veſted in the freemen at large, agreeably to the charter of Henry VII. or only in the body corporate, agreeably to the charter of Charles II. when, after a trial of eighteen hours, a verdict was given for the plaintiff.—Which verdict was afterwards ſet aſide by the Court of King's-bench.—In conſequence of which it was a ſecond time tried at Shrewſbury, before Judge Groſe and a ſpecial jury, when the iſſues were found as before, with this difference—that the charter of Charles *was accepted.*—Judgment was afterwards given, by the Court of King's-bench, for the defendants.—A writ of error was next brought into the Houſe of Peers, when, after ſeveral day's arguments, the Judges were pleaſed unanimouſly to reverſe the judgment of the Court of King's-bench, and give it in favour of the Crown, on the 20th of April, 1790.

1787 This year the remains of Thomas Birchelſey, otherwiſe Lythelles, chaplain to King Edward I. and abbot of this cathedral in 1291, were taken up in a lead coffin, near the altar in the choir, after having been in the earth 465 years! The appearance of the body evinced, that ſome endeavours had been uſed to preſerve it from putrefaction, which partially ſucceeded, the legs, arms, head, and even the features of the face, appearing in an aſtoniſhing ſtate of preſervation.—Such was the eagerneſs of the ſpectators to poſſeſs themſelves of each a relick of theſe ſacred remains, that a crucifix, and ſeveral pieces of the garments, were ſoon carried off; and had it not been ſpeedily re-interred, theſe

pious

pious purloiners would have had the *heart* to have carried away the *head*, ſo that at laſt the *legs* might have *walk'd off* in ſearch of the *reſt* of the *body!*

1788 This year one Thomas Mate was hung at Boughton, and his body afterwards diſſected, for ſhooting Mr. John Parry, a peace-officer.

1789 John Dean was executed for the murder of his wife, and his body afterwards hung in chains.

1789 This year the Dee-mills were burnt down.—Whether the fire happened from accident or deſign, is not known, tho' many ſuppoſe the latter.—On the ſite of theſe mills the preſent extenſive ones were erected, ſaid to be inferior to none in the kingdom.—Theſe valuable mills are the property of Edward Ommaney Wrench, Eſq. and are now leaſed by Mr. Whittle, of this city, brewer.

1791 In the month of April, this year, one Lowndes, alias Clarke, was executed at Boughton, for mail-robbing, and his body hung in chains, on the lofty ſummit of Helſby-Tor.——On the 8th of October, the ſame year, Joſeph Allen, David Aſton, and William Knock, were executed for burglary, on a new temporary gallows, erected at Boughton, for the purpoſe.

EXPLANATION

OF

REFERENCES IN THE PLAN.

a Blue-coat hoſpital.
b St. John's chapel.
c Corn market.
d d d Fleſh ſhambles.
e Regiſter office.
f Exchange.
g Green market.
h Fiſh ſhambles.
i i Old-Linen hall.
j Theatre and Wool hall.
k St. Oſwald's church.
l St. Peter's church.
m Trinity church.
n Cuſtom-houſe.
o Baptiſt chapel.
p St. Martin's church.
q St. Michael's church.
r St. Bridget's church.
ſ St. Mary's church.
s St. Olave's church.
t Quakers' meeting-houſe.
u Independents' chapel.
w Catholics' chapel.
w Octagon.
x Barrel-well.
y Pruſſian blue manufactory.
z Preſbyterians' chapel.
1 Windmill-lane.
2 Dee-lane.
3 Wall's-lane.
4 King's-ſtreet.
5 Prince's-ſtreet.
6 Martin's in the Fields.
7 Linen-hall ſtreet.
8 Trinity-lane.
9 Crook's-lane.
10 Stanley-place.
11 Brook's-ſtreet.
12 Smith's-walk.
13 Wall's-lane Nun's-garden.
14 Nun's-lane.
15 Nicholas-ſtreet.
16 Bunce-lane.
17 Weaver's-lane.
18 Whitefriars.
19 Cuppin's-lane.
20 Common-hall-lane.
21 Holme-ſtreet.
22 Caſtle-ſtreet.
23 Mary's-hill.
24 Glover's-ſtone.
25 Skinner's-lane.
26 Duke-ſtreet.
27 Park-ſtreet.
28 Newgate-ſtreet
29 Dee-lane.
30 Church-lane.
31 Barker's-lane.
32 Queen-ſtreet.
33 Warrington-ſtreet.
34 Werburgh's-lane.
35 Abbey-ſtreet.
36 Pepper-ſtreet.
37 Mill-ſtreet.
38 Sty-lane.
39 Love-lane.
a Pentice.
b Biſhop's palace.
c Poſt-office.
d New weighing machine.
e Bridge gate.
f Watergate.
g New Crane.
h Old Crane.
i Exciſe-office.
k Phœnix Tower.
l l l l The Walls.
m Martin's aſh.
n Five's-court.
o Bank.
r Stamp-office.
v Cockpit.
x Abbey-ſquare.

EXPLANATION

OF

REFERENCES IN THE PLAN.

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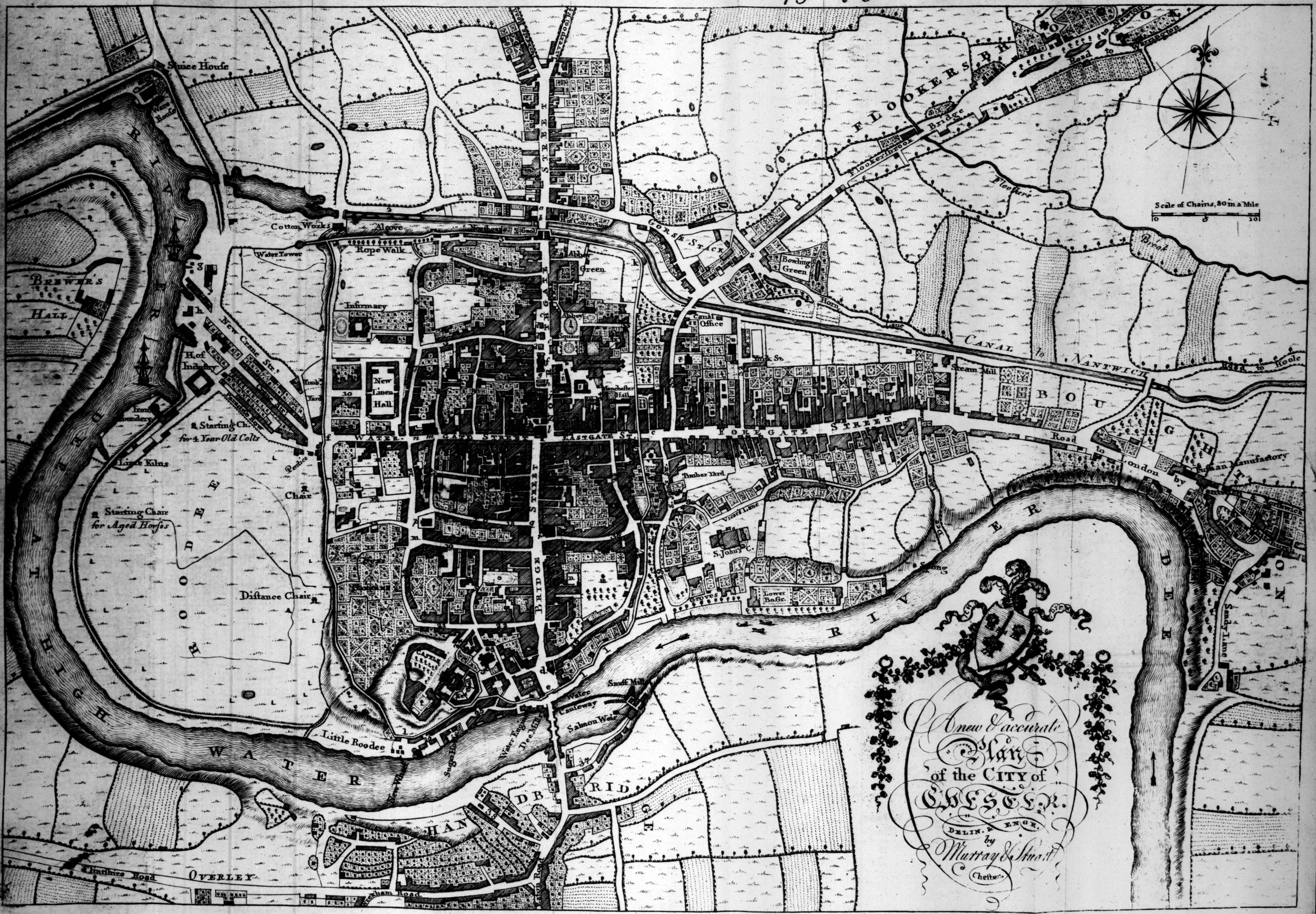

A

SUMMARY

OF THE

LIFE

OF

St. WERBURGH;

WITH AN

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

OF THE

IMAGES UPON HER SHRINE,

(NOW THE EPISCOPAL THRONE)

IN THE

CHOIR OF CHESTER.

COLLECTED FROM

ANTIENT CHRONICLES AND OLD WRITERS.

A SUMMARY, &c.

THE epiſcopal throne, in the cathedral church of *Cheſter*, allowed to be the ſhrine of St. *Werburgha*, to whom the abbey was dedicated, is a ſtone ſtructure in the antique monumental ſtile, of an oblong quadrangular form, eight feet and nine inches in height, in length from Eaſt to Weſt ſeven feet and ſix inches; in breadth from North to South four feet and eight inches; ornamented with ſix Gothic arches (three feet and four inches in height) two towards the North front, two towards the South, one at the Eaſt end, and the other at the Weſt; above each of theſe is an arch repreſenting a window, in the ſame ſtile of architecture.

This fabric is decorated with variety of carving, and embelliſhed with a number of images, about fourteen inches in height, in different habits, beautified with painting and gilding: Each of theſe held in one hand a ſcroll or label, upon which were inſcribed in *Latin*, but in the old *Engliſh* character, the names of Kings and Saints of the royal line of *Mercia*. Many of the labels are broke off, others are ſo much defaced, that only a ſyllable or two can be read.

Theſe ſtatues are placed in the following order, if we begin with the figure at the South-weſt angle,

gle, fronting the Weſt, and thence proceed over that end, along the North front, and thence round the Eaſt end, towards the ſtairs up to the throne.

1. Rex *Crieda.*
2. Rex *Penda.*
3. Rex *Wolpherus.*
4. Rex *Ceolredus.*
5. ----------
6. Rex *Offa.*
7. Rex *Egfertus.*
8. ----------
9. Stus *Kenelmus.*
10. Sta *Milburga.*
11. Rex *Beorna.*
12. Rex *Colwlphus.*
13. ----------
14. Sta ------*lda.*
15. -------*us.*
16. Rex -----*dus.*
17. Sta --------*rga.*
18. ---------*us.*
19. ----------
20. *Baldredus.*
21. *Merwaldus.*
22. Rex *Wiglaff.*
23. Rex *Bertwulph.*
24. Rex *Burghredus.*
25. ----------
26. Sta -------*eda.*
27. --------
28. ----------
29. Rex *Ethelbertus.*
30. Sta *Mildria.*

Four more images have been quite cut away, two at the Weſt, and two at the Eaſt End.

The perſonages which were intended to be repreſented by theſe ſtatues, were either her anceſtors, or elſe moſt of them nearly related to *St. Werburgha*, who was daughter of *Wulphere*, king of *Mercia*, by his queen *Erminilda*. She was (*a*) in her infancy (according to the cuſtom of thoſe times) betrothed, or married to her Couſin-German *Ceolredus*, afterwards king of *Mercia*; (*b*) yet notwithſtanding

(*a*) "Quæ adhuc puellula, nupta Ceolredo, more temporum, "virginitatem conſervavit illibatam, et poſt obitum mariti velata "eſt, cum matre Erminilda apud Hely, ſub Sancta Etheldreda "abbatiſſa, Erminildæ matertera." *Langhorn. Chron.*

(*b*) Notwithſtanding that the concurrent teſtimonies of ſeveral authors declare her to have been the wife of *Ceolredus*, yet the diſtance

withſtanding her marriage, ſhe kept herſelf a virgin, chaſte and inviolate, having been bred by her mother *Erminilda*, in the fear of God, and a contempt of all worldly vanities, ſhe very early formed a reſolution to dedicate herſelf to God in a ſtate of religion and virginity.

She perſiſted in this intention, not only during the time of marriage, but after her huſband's deceaſe,(*c*) notwithſtanding many great matches were propoſed to her: nor could ſhe be prevailed upon by her father to alter her reſolution, though, whilſt he lived, he would not ſuffer her to be profeſſed. (*d*)But after the death of *Wulphere*, ſhe and her mother *Erminilda* were veiled by St. *Etheldreda*, abbeſs of *Ely*. (*e*)Her uncle, king *Etheldred*,

diſtance of ſixty-ſix years between the times of their deceaſe, may poſſibly occaſion ſomewhat of a doubt: but any thing of that kind will be eaſily ſolved, if we conſider that ſhe was a very young girl (*Puellula*) when ſhe was married to this Prince, who lived to be, at leaſt, a middle-aged man, as he did not immediately ſucceed his father in the throne of *Mercia*, but had the kingdom after his couſin *Kenred*, and enjoyed it eight years. He died A. D. 716, and ſhe died A. D. 782. *Sax. Chron.*

(*c*) Werbodus vir magni nominis apud Wulfherum regem Merciorum ambiebat Werburgam in uxorem. *Bradſhaw, in vitæ Sanctæ Werburghæ*, L. 1.

(*d*) "Werburgha poſt mortem Wulpheri patris ſui intravit "monaſterium de Ely, cujus ſanctitatem cum Etheldredus rex "Merciorum, ejus patruus cognoviſſet, abductam ex Ely princi- "patum monaſteriorum ſanctimonialium, quæ in ejus regno "erant, ei tradidit." *Lelandi Collectania.*

(*d*) "Werburgham ſanctimonialem præfecit patruus rex "Etheldredus quibuſdam virginum monaſteriis,—ſcil: apud "Trickingham, Wedinam, et Hamburgam, ſed apud primam "obiit, apud tertiam, ut ipſa vivens juſſerat, ſepulta eſt; ubi "uſque adventum danorum incorrupta jacuit." *Higden.*

(*e*) "Decreverat Werburgha vivens, ut ſepeliretur in Heham- "burgenſi monaſterio.—*ex libello de genealogia, et vita S. Ethel-* "*dredæ.*"

dred, who ſucceeded his brother *Wulphere*, admiring his niece's eminent piety, and being much diſſatisfied that his kingdom ſhould be deprived of ſuch a pattern of religion and virtue, made the moſt preſſing applications to her, to quit *Ely*, and return to her native country: ſhe was at length prevailed upon to come back into *Mercia*, and to accept the ſuperintendency of ſeveral religious virgin-ſocieties, *viz.* the monaſteries of *Trickingham* (now *Trentham*) in *Staffordſhire*; *Weedon*, in *Northamptonſhire*; and *Hanbury*, in *Staffordſhire*. At the firſt of theſe places ſhe died, and (according to her deſire, when living) was buried at the laſt, where her body remained entire and incorrupt for almoſt one hundred years.

Malmeſbury (*de geſtis regum*, L. i. Ch. 4.) ſays, that ſhe died and was buried at *Cheſter*; but *Higden* tells us, that her remains were depoſited at *Hanbury* (near *Tutbury*) in *Staffordſhire*, and (*f*) that in the year 875, when the *Danes* had ravaged a great part of *Mercia*, and were advanced as far as (*g*) *Repton* in *Derbyſhire*, the people of *Hanbury*, terrified with their devaſtations, took up the corpſe of St. *Werburgh*, which they found freſh and entire, and carried it in a hearſe to *Cheſter*, as a place of ſafety, from the havock and barbarities of the *Danes*.

We

(*f*) "Dani venerunt apud rependonium ubi hyemarunt, "Hamburgenſes indigenæ, qui 5 circiter milliaribus a rependo-"nio diſtant, pavore ſoluti, corpus Sanctæ Werburghæ, diu "ibidem reconditum, et ſemper eſque hunc incorruptum, cum "feretro corpus beatæ virginis continente, ad Legeceſtriam (quæ "nunc Ceſtria dicitur) tanquam ad locum tutiſſimum contra "ſtragem barbaricam tranſtulerunt." *Ibid. ad Ann.* 875.

(*g*) Erroneouſly called *Rippon* by Mr. *Guthrie*, Vol. I. p. 212.

We do not find from any of the old writers, about what time her ſhrine was erected, but ſhall endeavour to give ſome account of thoſe, whoſe ſtatues are carved upon it.

CRIEDA (Figure 1.) This Prince was derived, by *(i)* about ten deſcents from *Woden*, the famous ſtem and origin of the *Saxons*, and indeed the common father of the northern nations. He came into *Britain*, A. D. 584, and founded the ſovereignty of *Mercia*, which, by the conqueſts and acquiſitions of his ſucceſſors, became afterwards the moſt powerful kingdom of the *Saxon heptarchy*; having for its boundaries, *Humber* on the North, the *Severn* on the Weſt, the *Thames* on the South, and on the Eaſt, the kingdoms of *Eſſex* and of the *Eaſt-Angels*. It conſiſted of *Cheſhire*, *Derbyſhire*, *Nottinghamſhire*, *Staffordſhire*, *Shropſhire*, *Northamptonſhire*, *Leiceſterſhire*, *Lincolnſhire*, *Huntingdonſhire*, *Rutlandſhire*, *Warwickſhire*, *Worceſterſhire*, *Oxfordſhire*, *Gloceſterſhire*, *Buckinghamſhire*, *Bedfordſhire*, part of *Herefordſhire*, and a ſmall portion of *Somerſetſhire*. Hiſtorians have not informed us how *Crieda* firſt got poſſeſſion of this kingdom, nor have they tranſmitted any thing more concerning him. He died A. D. 593.

PENDA, ſirnamed *The Strong* (Figure 2.) He was the grandſon of *Crieda*, and did not come to the throne till he was fifty years of age. He was of a bold, reſtleſs, and enterprizing ſpirit, ever invading and ravaging the territories of the neighbouring

(i) " Crieda fuit filius Cynewoldi, Cynewoldus Cnebbæ " Cnebba Iceli, Icelus Eomærus Eomæri Angeltheowi, Angel- " theowus, Offæ, Offa Wærmundi, Wærmundus Wihtlægi, Wih- " tlægu Wodeni." *Sax. Chron. in Pendæ genealogia, ad. ann.* 626.

bouring Princes. Having marched againſt *Oſwald*, King of the *Northumbers*, they came to a battle at a place called *(j) Maſerfelth*, where *Oſwald* was ſlain on the fifth of *Auguſt*, A. D. 642. By this victory *Penda* made himſelf maſter of thoſe parts of the *Northumbrian* dominions which lay on the South-ſide of the *Humber*. He then laid ſiege to *Bamborough*, which had been built *(k)* and ſtrongly fortified by *Ida*, the firſt King of the *Northumbers*: *Penda* endeavoured to reduce it by fire, but was baffled, and retreated.

As his whole reign was a continual warfare, he had, at different times, killed in battle, five Chriſtian Kings; and though he would never be converted, yet he permitted his ſon *Peada* to be baptized, and to receive preachers and miſſionaries into

(j) Hiſtorians differ as to the ſituation of *Bede's Maſerfelth*. *Camden*, and from him, *Rapin*, *Carte*, and *Guthrie*, will have it to be *Oſwaldſtreet*, or *Oſweſtry*, Com. Salop. *Powell*, in his deſcription of *Wales*, ſays, that it was in the *Northumbrian* territories, and not at *Oſwaldſtrey*, which was called, by the *Britons*, *Maeſmswalbt*, not *Maſerfelth*. In *Lancaſhire* there is a large fee, called *Mackerfield*, in which lies part of *Winwick* pariſh, where, and eſpecially in the town of *Newton*, within that diſtrict, is a tradition, that King *Oſwald* had a palace or caſtle thereabouts, where he moſtly reſided, and this *Mackerfield* was within the *Northumbrian* dominion, which *Shropſhire* was not. On the South-outſide wall of *Winwick* church are carved, in the old *Engliſh* character, ſome verſes relating to this Prince:

Hic locus, Oſwalde, quondam placuit tibi valde Nortanhumbrorum fueras Rex, nunc q polorum Regna tenes, &c. &c. &c.

(k) " Ida regnum capeſſit, unde Northanhymbrorum regalis " proſapia primum oriunda eſt; is conſtruxit Bebbanburh, quod " primum ſepto fuit munitum, ac poſtea muro. *Sax. Chron. ſub. ann.* 547.

Mr. *Guthri*, in ſeveral paſſages, miſtakes *Banbury* for this place.

into his territories. *(l) Bede* tells us, that *Penda* was wont to expreſs a great abhorrence of thoſe outſide Chriſtians, who did not practiſe what they profeſſed; declaring thoſe to be contemptible wretches who did not ſerve that God in whom they believed.

Penda's chief pleaſure was in harraſſing the *Northumbrians*; and having engaged in a war with King *Oſwy*, brother and ſucceſſor to *Oſwald*, they fought a bloody battle on the fifteenth of *November*, A. D. 655, upon *(m)* the banks of the River *Winuaed* (now *Aire*) near *Leeds*, in *Yorkſhire*, where the *Mercians* were totally routed, and *(n) Penda*, together with thirty chieftains of royal extraction, killed upon the ſpot: He was ſlain in the eightieth year of his age, having reigned thirty years.

WULPHERE, the ſecond ſon of *Penda* (Figure 3.) He ſucceeded his elder brother *Peada*, who was poiſoned by his wife, a *Northumbrian* Princeſs, in the third year of his reign.

Wulphere, during his infancy, had been concealed, preſerved, and afterwards ſet upon the throne of *Mercia*, by the care and affection of three noblemen: Soon after his acceſſion, he renounced Paganiſm, was baptized, and cauſed his children to be educated in the Chriſtian religion.

He was an active Prince, much embroiled with his

(l) "Penda rex odio habebat, et deſpiciebat eos, quos fide "Chriſti imbutos, opera fidei non habere deprehendit, dicens "contemnendos eſſe eoes et miſeros, qui Deo ſuo in quem cre- "derent obedire contemnerent." *l.* iii. *ch.* 21.

(m) The place was afterwards called *Winwidfield*, or the *Field of Victory*.

(n) Hoc anno, Penda periit in Winwidfelda, et xxx e prole Regia cum eo. *Sax. Chron. ſub. ann.* 655.

neighbouring potentates, and waged war with various ſucceſs. He was attacked by *Kenwalch*, King of the *Weſt-Saxons*, but had the good fortune to defeat the invaders; and ſo far improved his victory, that he ſubdued *Buckinghamſhire*, and the adjoining parts of *Oxfordſhire*, as far as the *Thames*: and afterwards conquered a part of *Surrey*, *Hampſhire*, and the *Iſle of Wight*. Having fought and vanquiſhed *Adelwalch*, King of the *South-Saxons*, he brought him priſoner into *Mercia*, where he was converted to Chriſtianity; upon which *Wulphere* reſtored him to his liberty, *(n)* and gave him the *Iſle of Wight*, and a large diſtrict in *Hampſhire*.

Malmeſbury charges *Wulphere* with ſimonically ſelling the biſhoprick of *London* to one *Wyna*, which, if true, ſerves to evince that he had got an abſolute ſway in the kingdom of *Eſſex*.

In the ſeventeenth and laſt year of his reign, he fought a bloody battle with *Eſcwin*, King of the *Weſt-Saxons*, at *(o)* *Bedanheof*, where a terrible ſlaughter was made: *Henry*, of *Huntingdon*, ſays, that if there was any advantage gained in this battle, it might be claimed by the *Mercian*, who died not long afterwards.

Wulphere married *Erminilda*, Princeſs of *Kent*: *(p)* Their chief reſidence was near *Stone*, in *Staffordſhire*; and by her he had iſſue, a daughter, *Werburgha*,

(n) "Duas illi provincias donavit Vectam videlicet inſulam, "et Meanvarorum provinciam." *Bedæ*, *l.* iv. *ch.* 13.

(o) Suppoſed by ſome to be *Bedwin*, in *Wiltſhire*; by others, *Bidenham*, near *Bedford*.

(p) Wulferus et Erminilda habitaverunt non longè a Stone opp. Stafordenſis Provinciæ. *Ex 1mo libro Hen. Bradſhaw Monachi Ceſtriens.*

Werburgha, and three ſons, two of which died before him (ſome writers ſay, killed by him) but the third, *Kenred*, came afterwards to be King of *Mercia*.

CEOLRED (Figure 4.) nephew of *Wulphere*, couſin German, and (according to the *Saxon* Chronicle) huſband to *(q)* St. *Werburgha*, whoſe brother *Kenred* reſigned to him the kingdom of *Mercia*.

In the year 715, he fought a memorable battle with *Ina*, King of the *Weſt-Saxons*, at *Wodensburgh*, in *Wiltſhire*; but the occaſions of this war are not related by any hiſtorian. *Henry*, of *Huntingdon*, tells us, that it was a bloody engagement, and ſo fatal to both ſides, that it was hard to ſay which had ſuffered moſt. Little elſe is recorded of this Prince: He was reputed to be of an active, warlike diſpoſition, and had a great character. He died in the ninth year of his reign, A. D. 716, and was interred at *Litchfield*.

OFFA (Figure 6.) A Prince of the antient lineage of *Woden*, and of the royal houſe of *Mercia*, being deſcended from *Eawa* (or *Eapa*) brother of King *Penda*, grandfather to St. *Werburgha*. *Offa* was called to the throne of *Mercia* by the unanimous voice of the people, harraſſed out by the tyrannical oppreſſions of the uſurper *Beorned*. He began to reign A. D. 756, and was accounted one of the greateſt among the *Mercian* monarchs. His firſt exploit, after his acceſſion to the throne of his anceſtors, was an expedition againſt the people of *Kent*, whom he invaded with a powerful force; and, after an obſtinate engagement,

 routed

(*q*) Werburga, Ceolredi regina, ſub anno 782.

routed their army, and, with his own hand, killed their King *Alric*. This battle was fought at *Otford*, upon the *Darent*, A. D. 774.

In the year following, he attacked the *Weſt-Saxons*, and defeated their King *Kenwulph*, at *Benſington* (or *Benſon*) in *Oxfordſhire*, adjoining to *Berkſhire*, and forced him to a ceſſion of all that territory on the North of the *Thames*, which, from that time, became a part of the kingdom of *Mercia*. He ſoon afterwards ſubdued *Gloceſterſhire*, and a part of *Somerſetſhire*, and founded the Abbey of *Bath*: And next, to ſhew his great power, attempted to remove the archiepiſcopal ſee from *Canterbury*, and to fix it at *Litchfield*.

About this time, the *Welſh*, taking the opportunity of his wars with the *Saxons*, invaded *Mercia* with fire and ſword, and ravaged the country in a dreadful manner: Upon which *Offa* thought it prudent to come to a truce with his other adverſaries, and turning his arms againſt the *Welſh*, drove them from their new conqueſts, and forced them to quit to him all the plain country between *Severn* and *Wye*, which he peopled with *Saxons*; and as a boundary and barrier againſt future invaſions, he threw up that prodigious trench from the mouth of the River *Dee*, to that of the *Wye*, extending about ninety miles, and ſince called *Offa's Dyke*. "This *Foſs*," ſays the Right Reverend Editor of *Camden*, "may be ſeen on *Brachy-hill*, and near "*Rhyd* (or *Helig*) and *Lanterden*, in *Hereford-*"*ſhire*; and is continued northwards from *Knighton*, "over a part of *Shropſhire*, into *Montgomeryſhire*; "and may be traced over the long mountain, called, "in *Welſh*, *Kevn Digolh*, to *Hawarden-Caſtle*,

"crofs

" croſs the *Severn*, *Llan-Drinio Common*; from " whence it paſſes *Vyrnwy*, again into *Shrop-* " *ſhire*, not far from *Oſwaldſtry*, where there is " alſo a ſmall village, called *Trevyrclawdh*. In " *Denbighſhire*, it is viſible along the road between " *Rhyabbon* and *Wrexham*; from whence being " continued thorough *Flintſhire*, it ends a little " below *Holy-well*, where that water falls into the " *Dee*, at a place formerly the ſite of *Baſing-* " *wark.*"(r)

The reputation of this Prince was raiſed to ſuch a height, that *Charles the Great* (commonly called *Charlemaine*) the moſt powerful and accompliſhed monarch of that age, ſought his friendſhip, ſending him rich preſents; and, upon this account, granting conſiderable immunities to *Engliſh* travellers.

But *Charles* had, ſoon afterwards, good reaſon to alter his opinion of *Offa*'s character, which became deeply ſtained by an act of moſt perfidious cruelty. *Offa* was, by a ſolemn treaty, to give his daughter *Altrida* in marriage to *Ethelbert*, King of the *Eaſt-Angles*; and accordingly that Prince came, by in-

 vitation,

(r) It has been mentioned by ſome writers, that when *Offa* had finiſhed his dyke, he promulged a decree, that if any *Welſhman* ſhould paſs over this boundary, he ſhould be puniſhed with the loſs of his right hand.

This is hinted at in a poem publiſhed by a young nobleman of *Oxford*, about eighty years ago.

" *Tu poteras Olim Cambros inhibere feroces,*
" *Quos intercluſit multo ſtructa aggere foſſa,*
" *Et pudor abſciſſæ, perrupto limite, dextræ.*"

Which may be thus tranſlated:

You could, great *Offa*, with deep dykes encloſe,
Within their bounds, your rugged *Cambrian* foes;
Nor dar'd they range into the *Mercian* lands,
Dreading the doom of amputated hands.

vitation, into *Mercia*, where *(ſ) Offa*, by the inſtigation of his wife, in order to get the kingdom of the *Eaſt-Angles*, baſely broke through all faith and hoſpitality, and cauſed his royal, unſuſpecting gueſt to be aſſaſſinated *(t)* by one *Grimbert*, in his court at *Sutton-Wallis*, in *Herefordſhire*, upon the firſt day of *May*, A. D. 792. The body of *(u)* the murdered King was, by *Offa*'s orders, buried at *Marden*, not far from *Hereford*, upon the banks of the River *Lug*; but was afterwards removed from thence, and depoſited in *Hereford*, where the Cathedral is ſince built, and dedicated to his memory.

The Princes of thoſe times could atone for crimes of the blackeſt dye, by pilgrimages, and donations to religious uſes.

Offa, in order to obtain quiet for his conſcience, ſet out for *Rome*; and, whilſt there, granted to the *Pope* and his ſucceſſors, that tribute which has been ſince called *Peter-pence*.

Having received his holineſs's abſolution, he returned to *England*, and built and endowed the Abbey of St. *Albans*, which he juſt lived to finiſh. Having reigned thirty-nine years, he died about the end of *July*, or the beginning of *Auguſt*, A. D. 794.

EGFERTUS (or EGFRIDUS) (Figure 7.) ſon and ſucceſſor to *Offa*, a Prince of great hopes, but ſoon

(ſ) Uxor Offæ maritum conſilio impellit, ut hoſpitem, et futurum generum è medio tollat. *Leland. Collect. v.* 1. *p.* 213.

(t) Ethelbrightus rex a Guimberto famulo Offæ olim ejus in Eſtanglia familiari amico occiditur. *Ibid.*

(u) Offa juſſit Ethelbrighti corpus cum capite in ripa Lugi fluv. in comit. Hereſordiæ tecte ſepeliri, id quod factum eſt. *Ibid.*

ſoon ſnatched away, having reigned only one hundred and forty-one days. He was interred in the monaſtery at St. *Albans*.

St. KENELM. (Figure 9.) This infant king was the ſon of *Kenulf*, (*v*) a Prince of the *Mercian* blood-royal, who ſucceeded *Egfert*, juſt before mentioned. *Kenelm* was but ſeven years old at the death of his father, and his own acceſſion to the crown: he had reigned only a few months, when his ſiſter *Quendrida* plotted againſt his life, (*vv*) and procured his tutor, (one *Aſcobert*) to murder him; who decoying the innocent youth into an unfrequented wood, cut off his head, and buried him under a thorn-tree. The author of *Polychronicon* ſays, that the corpſe was thrown into a well. Several old hiſtorians mention the murder of this prince, and the miraculous manner of its diſcovery: concerning the latter, *William of Malmeſbury* and *Matthew of Weſtminſter*, give the following legendary account, *viz.* "That after the perpetration "of this bloody deed, the inhuman ſiſter ſoon "ſeized the kingdom, and prohibited all enquiry "after her loſt brother: but this horrible fact, "concealed in *England*, was made known at *Rome*, "by a ſupernatural revelation; for on the altar of "St. *Peter* there, a white dove let fall a paper, "on which, in golden letters, was inſcribed both "the death of *Kenelm*, and the place of his burial,

 "*viz.*

(*v*) Trinepos Wibbæ patris Pendæ. *Mat. of Weſtminſter*, p. 221.

(*vv*) Kenelmus occiſus ab Aſkeberto ejus nutritio et procuratore conſilio Quendridæ in valle de Clent. *Leland. Collect.* v. i. p. 212.

" *viz.*—In (*x*) *Clent Cow-batch*, *Kenelme* King " bearne, lieth under a thorne, heaved, bereaved."

Tyrrel thus renders into our *Engliſh* this *Saxon* inſcription:

" *In* (*y*) Clent *Cow-paſture*, *under a thorn*,
" *Of head bereft*, *lies* Kenelm, *King born*."

" The *Roman* Prieſts and Monks could not un- " derſtand the characters, but an *Engliſhman*, being " accidentally preſent, read the inſcription, and " tranſlated it into *Latin*; whereupon the *Pope* " ſent over an envoy to the *Engliſh* Kings, to in- " form them concerning the murdered *Kenelm*. " The affair being thus miraculouſly revealed, the " body was taken out of the hole where it had been " hid, and with great ſolemnity carried to *Winchel-* " *combe* in *Gloceſterſhire*, and there interred in the " Church of that abbey, which his father had found- " ed; ſoon afterwards pilgrimages were made to his " tomb, and *Camden* ſays, that it is ſcarcely credi- " ble in what great repute *Winchelcombe* monaſtery " was on account of this Royal Saint."

The unnatural ſiſter did not long enjoy the fruit of her ambitious cruelty; for ſhe was outed from the throne by her Uncle *Ceolwulf*, in a few months after her brother was killed.

St.

(*x*) Clent ex vacca alba, indice ſepulchri Kenelmi, Cowdale vulgo appellata.

" *In Clent ſub ſpina jacet in convalle bovina*,
" *Vertice truncatus Kenelmus rege creatus*.

(*y*) *Clent* is ſituated on the utmoſt ſouth borders of *Staffordſhire*, adjoining to *Worceſterſhire*. Near to this place is a famous ſpring called St. *Kenelm's Well*, to which extraordinary virtues have been attributed.

St. MILBURGA, (Figure 10.) Daughter of *Merwaldus*, the fourth ſon of King *Penda*, a near kinſwoman to St. *Werburgha*.

BEORNA, (Figure 11.) This name, as upon the ſcroll, or label, is not in the catalogue of the ſovereigns of *Mercia*, though we meet with it among the Kings of the *Eaſt-angles*, over whom one *Biorna* reigned, and lived in the time of St. *Werburgh*.

COLWLPHUS (commonly wrote CEOLWULF) (Figure 12.) was brother of King *Kenulf*, and uncle to the aſſaſſinated *Kenelm*. He drove his barbarous niece *Quendrida*, from the *Mercian* throne, and began to reign A. D. 820, but in his ſecond year, he himſelf was defeated, and forced out of his territories, by an uſurper, named *Beornwulph*. He left only one daughter, called *Kenedritha*.

Sta - - - - - -LDA. (Figure 14.) From the three only remaining letters of the name upon this label, we may reaſonably conjecture, that this female ſaint was intended to repreſent *Erminilda*, mother of St. *Werburgh*, and daughter of *Ercombert*, King of *Kent*, by his Wife *Sexburga*, Princeſs of the *Eaſt-angles*. *Ercombert* was a zealous Chriſtian, deſtroyed heathen idols, and demoliſhed their temples. He inſtituted the obſervance of *Lent* in his kingdom, and was (ſaith *Malmeſbury*) "famous for his piety towards God, and his love to "his country." He married his daughter (z) *Erminilda* to *Wulphere*, King of *Mercia*, by whom ſhe had *Werburgha* and other children.

After

(z) Erminilda, filia S. Sexburghæ, nupſit Wulphero, regi Merciorum, ex quo genuit Werburgham.—*Ex libello de genealogia et vita S. Etheldredæ.*

After her huſband's death, ſhe, and her daughter *Werburgha*, were veiled by her aunt *Etheldreda*, abbeſs of Ely; (*a*) and thence ſhe went to *Shepye* (in *Kent*) of which, ſhe was, by her mother *Sexburga*, appointed abbeſs. She afterwards ſucceeded her aunt in the abbey of Ely, (*b*) where ſhe died, and was buried. She is ſaid to have founded the priory of *Stone in Staffordſhire*; but others attribute it to her huſband, King *Wulphere*.

Rex- - - - - - - -DUS. (Figure 16.) This ſtatue has the ſtile of King, yet holds a croſier in one hand, by which tokens, corroborated by the remaining ſyllable on the label, it may be ſuppoſed to have been the effigies of *Ethelredus*, uncle to St. *Werburgh*, and ſucceſſor to his brother *Wulphere*, in the kingdom of *Mercia*. Though he ſeems to have taken upon him the government, as his nephew *Kenred* was ſo very young at his father's death, yet he held the reins rather too long for a regency.

Soon after his taking the crown, (*c*) he ravaged the kingdom of *Kent*, and deſtroyed moſt of the churches, monaſteries, and poſſeſſions belonging to the ſee of *Rocheſter*. He then entered into a war with *Egfrid*, king of the *Northumbers*, and conquered the much greater part of *Lincolnſhire*, which was confirmed to him by treaty. The venerable hiſtorian tells us, that he afterwards began to be religiouſly diſpoſed, and to compenſate for his

(*a*) Mortuo Wulphero, Erminilda venit ad Shepege ubi, Sexburga, matre Abbas facta eſt. *Ex eodem.*

(*b*) Obiit Erminilda et ſepulta eſt in Ely. *Ex eodem.*

(*b*) Sancta Erminilda apud Hely pauſat. *Malmeſbury.*

(*c*) Etheldredus rex Merc: Cantiam vaſtavit, unde Rouceſtria deſtructa. *Leland. Collect.* v. i. p. 212.

his devaſtations in the dioceſe of *Rocheſter*, he erected a Biſhoprick at *Worceſter*, and was a great benefactor to the abbey of *Peterborough*; and delivering up the kingdom to the rightful heir *Kenred*, he became abbot of the monaſtery of *Bardeney* in *Lincolnſhire*, where he died, and was buried.

Sta- - - - - -RGA. (Figure 17.) By the termination upon the ſcroll, and the number of letters required to fill up the ſpace, this figure may be conjectured to have repreſented St. *Keneburga*, who was ſiſter to King *Wulphere*, and aunt to St. *Werburgh*. She was married to *Adelwal*, Prince of the *Northumbers*, and was a conſiderable benefactreſs to the monaſtery of *Peterborough:* After the death of her huſband ſhe took the veil, and was much eſteemed for her eminent piety. About three hundred years after her death, her bones were dug up by *Ælfius*, Abbot of *Peterborough*, and buried in that Monaſtery.

- - - - -US. (Figure 18.) This image holds in its right hand a paſtoral ſtaff, and may, from the character and diſpoſition of that Prince, not improbably, be ſuppoſed to repreſent *Kenredus*, brother to St. *Werburgh*, who is, more than once, mentioned under Figure 16. His being a helpleſs infant at his father's death, induced his uncle *Ethelred* to aſſume the government, as has been before taken notice of. His uncle's continuing on the throne did not ſeem to affect him, who was allowed to be much fitter for a cloyſter than for a court. After he had reigned about five years, he relinquiſhed the crown to his couſin-german *Ceolred*, before-mentioned, went to *Rome*, accepted of an Abbacy,

Abbacy, but paſſed the remainder of his days in the Monaſtery of St. *Peter*, in that city.

BALDREDUS. (Figure 20.) No ſuch perſon occurs among the *Mercian* Princes, but we meet with one of that name, who was the laſt of the Kings of *Kent:* for *Kenulf*, King of *Mercia*, having conquered that kingdom (A. D. 794) appointed *Cuthred*, a *Mercian* nobleman, to govern there, and, upon his deceaſe, permitted his ſon, *Baldred*, to ſucceed him, who having reigned near eighteen years, was attacked and defeated by *Egbert*, reputed the firſt Monarch of *England*, who drove him out of his territories, and he was never heard of afterwards.(*d*)

MERWALDUS, called MERWALA. (Figure 21.) in the *Saxon annals*; which chronicle agrees with *Malmeſbury*, *Simeon of Durham*, and *Florence of Worceſter*, that he was the fourth ſon of King *Penda*; was father of St. *Milburga*, St. *Mildreda*, and St. *Milguida*; and was uncle to St. *Werburgha*: his elder brother, *Ethelred*, as ſoon as he came to the throne of *Mercia*, erected *Herefordſhire* into a ſovereignty, and gave it to *Merwald*, who had married a daughter of *Ermenred*, King of *Kent*, by whom he had the three daughters before mentioned, but no male iſſue.

WIGLAFF, commonly called WITLAFF, (Figure 22.) and by the *Saxon Chronicle*, WITHLAFF, was a great chieftain, or eolderman, among the *Mercians*; and by them (after the Royal line was extinct) advanced to the ſovereign power. *Florence* of

(*d*) Though the ſtyle *Rex*, was not on the label, yet the figure had a crown upon its head.

of *Worceſter* ſtiles him (*e*) a petty King in the weſtern part of *Mercia*. Two years after his promotion, the great *Saxon* Prince, *Egbert*, having reduced moſt of *Mercia*, marched an army againſt *Wiglaff*, and drove him out of his territory: the vanquiſhed Prince fled to the Abbey of *Croyland*, and was concealed for three or four months, in his couſin *Etheldreda*'s cell; at length, by the mediation of *Siward*, Abbot of that monaſtery, he was reſtored to his ſovereignty, and permitted to enjoy it, ſubject to a tribute. This King *Wiglaff* ſeems to have been related to St. *Werburgha*, as the hiſtorians call him the kinſman of *Etheldreda*, who was aunt to *Erminilda*, the mother of *Werburgha*.

BERTWULPH. (Figure 23.) He was the brother of *Wiglaff*, and began to reign A. D. 839, but was admitted to his government, only as a tributary Prince under *Egbert* the *Saxon*. His rule continued for about twelve or thirteen years, when the *Danes*, in three hundred ſhips, came up the *Thames*, and making a deſcent, took *Canterbury* and *London*; and defeating *Bertwulph*'s army, drove him out of *Mercia*, and forced him to take refuge abroad.

BURGHREDUS. (Figure 24.) He was permitted to ſucceed *Bertwulph*, upon the like tributary tenure, A. D. 852. He is mentioned (by the ſtile of *Rex*) to have been preſent, along with many other Princes, at the endowment of (*f*) *Medeſhamſtede* monaſtery. He (*g*) married *Ethelwida*, daughter of *Ethelwulph*, or *Adalwulph*, the *Saxon* monarch, who, upon an application from his ſon-in-law,

(*e*) In occidentali plaga Merciorum regulus.

(*f*) Now *Peterborough*.

(*g*) Filia Adelwulfi regis Weſt-Sax. nupſit Burghredo regi Merciorum. *Hoveden*.

in-law, and the *Mercian* nobility, entered into an alliance with him to aſſiſt him in his wars againſt the *Welſh*; and he accordingly marched a powerful army through *Mercia*, and warred againſt the *Welſh* with ſo much ſucceſs, that he obliged them to come to *Burghred*'s own terms.

After he had continued in the government of *Mercia* twenty-two years, he was over-powered and defeated by the *Danes*; and being forced to fly beyond the ſeas, he took refuge at *Rome*, where he ended his days in the *Engliſh* ſeminary, and was buried in their church, dedicated to the Bleſſed Virgin.

Sta - - - - - - - EDA. (Figure 26.) By the remains on the defaced label belonging to this image, it may be conjectured, that it was intended for St. *Etheldreda*, who was great aunt to St. *Werburga*, and veiled her and her mother *Erminilda*, at her Abbey of *Ely*. This *Etheldreda* was daughter of *Anna*, King of the *Eaſt-Angles*, *(i)* and widow of *Tonbert*, a Prince in the ſouthern *(j)* parts of *Northumberland*, and afterwards married to *Egfrid*, king of the *Northumbers*, with whom ſhe lived twelve years, yet ſtill preſerved her virginity. She took the veil from St. *Ebba*, Abbeſs of *Coldingham*, and ſoon after became *(k)* Abbeſs of *Ely*, where ſhe died, and was buried A. D. 679.

ETHELBERTUS. (Figure 29.) There was no *Mercian* King of this name, but ſeveral in other kingdoms during the heptarchy: Among theſe was

(*i*) Tondberćto defuncto, data eſt Regi Ecgfrido, cujus conſortio cum duodecim annis uteretur, perpetua tamen manſit virginitatis integritate glorioſa. *Bede*, l. iv. ch. 12.

(*j*) Tunbertus, Auſtralium Girviorum princeps, primus S. Etheldridæ maritus. Egfridus autem rex Northumbr. ſecundus erat. *Leland. Collect.* v. i. p. 212.

(*k*) Ipſa facta eſt Abbatiſſa in regione quæ vocatur Elge. *Bed* ut antea.

was *Ethelbert*, King of *Kent*, who was one of the moſt celebrated Princes of his time, and the firſt Chriſtian King of his nation. Having founded ſeveral ſees, he died in the fifty-ſixth year of his reign.

Ethelbert was great great grandfather to St. *Werburgh*; his grandſon *Ercombert*'s daughter, *Erminilda*, being her mother.

Sta MILDRIDA. (Figure 30.) This Princeſs is taken notice of, under *Fig.* 21, as daughter of *Merwaldus*, and couſin German to St. *Werburgh*: Little or nothing elſe concerning her is mentioned by any of our hiſtorians.

We have now gone through with the propoſed hiſtorical ſketches relating to each of theſe images, whoſe repreſented original could be aſcertained by its label; and have ſupplied ſome of the defaced ones with ſuch conjectures, as (it is hoped) will not be deemed irrational or improbable.

The memoirs of the *Mercian* Saints might have been a good deal enlarged; but the *legendary* and *miraculous* have been ſtudiouſly avoided; and of theſe ſort of anecdotes, but a ſingle ſpecimen is given, *viz.* in the account of that young Saint, the murdered *Kenelm*.

There would likewiſe have been a more ample mention of our virgin patroneſs (St. *Werburgh*) but that only a ſummary, not a hiſtory, is intended: Yet in the preceding pages ſome of her excellencies will appear, as well as her royal lineage and high extraction; ſhe being deſcended from, and allied to, not only the *Mercian* monarchs, but alſo the Kings of *Kent*, thoſe of the *Eaſt-Angles*, and other potentates of the *Saxon* heptarchy: And the liberal

benefaction

benefactions of the renowned (l) *Ethèldred* and *Ethelfleda*; the charter of King (m) *Edgar*; the munificence of (n) *Leofric* and his Lady *Godiva*; and the noble endowments of (o) our famous *Hugh Lupus*, his Counteſs *Ermentrude*, and his *Barons*; together with the confirmations and additional bounties of the ſucceeding Earls of *Cheſter*, will ſufficiently evince the great reſpect and veneration which after-ages had for the memory of this devout and exemplary Princeſs.

As the ſhrine of this Saint, and his curious decorations here treated of, have not been touched upon by any of our writers; perhaps even theſe haſty collections may be of ſervice to ſome future compiler, who may poſſibly undertake to give us the hiſtory and antiquities of the churches and city of *Cheſter*.

(l) Theſe were Sovereigns of *Mercia* about the beginning of the tenth century: *Florence, of Worceſter*, ſtiles him *Vir eximiæ probitatis*. She was the daughter of King *Alfred*, and is celebrated in hiſtory. Eldredus dux Merciorum, cui nupſit Elfleda, Alfredi Weſt-Sax. regis Filia. *Leland. Coll.* v. i. p. 212.

(m) The donations of that Prince are, "Humili Familiæ "Deo omnipotenti in honorem Sanctiſſimæ, ſemperque Virgi- "nis Werburghæ, in loco qui dicitur Leiaceſtria, aſſidue mili- "tanti." *Monaſtic.* v. i. p. 200.

Some parts of this old charter being perhaps not very legible, might have occaſioned Sir *William Dugdale's Anachroniſm*; for he makes the date of it to be A. D. 858, which was juſt one hundred years before *Edgar* began his reign. This King was at *Cheſter* A. D. 972, and died A. D. 975, in the thirty-third year of his age.

(n) Leofricus Comes reparavit Monaſterium Werburghæ Ceſtriæ. *Leland. Collectan.* v. ii. p. 60.

He was Earl of *Mercia*, *circa* A. D. 1018. *Godiva* was that *moſt remarkable* benefactreſs to the city of *Coventry*, mentioned by ſeveral of our hiſtorians.

(o) Leofricus Comes templum in honorem Werburghæ Virginis poſuit, quod poſtea Hugo primus e Normannico genere Ceſtrie Comes reſtauravit. *Camdeni Britan.* p. 467.

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